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The study of Christian  
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# THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## I

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Prepared by

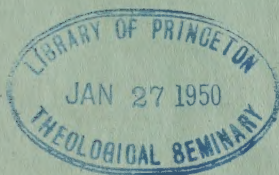
THE COMMITTEE ON THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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## PREFACE

This document is one of eight reports issued by the Committee on the Study of Christian Education to the International Council of Religious Education. The committee was established by Council action at the Annual Meeting in February, 1944, with Dr. Paul H. Vieth of the Yale University Divinity School as chairman, Dr. Nevin C. Harner, now President of Heidelberg College, as vice-chairman, and Dr. Gerald E. Knoff of the International Council staff as executive secretary.

The committee interpreted its task as that of presenting its final reports as independent findings, addressed to the Council rather than as reports which necessarily had to have Council approval. The Council found itself in complete agreement with this understanding and took specific action to that effect at the Annual Meeting of 1945.

Some of these reports were presented to the Council at the February 1946 Annual Meeting; others were presented in 1947. All of the documents have been presented to the International Council though they are not to be interpreted necessarily as the findings of the Council.

Some of the recommendations have been formally adopted by Council action; others have been received for study and later action, as will be shown in the minutes of the International Council for the Annual Meetings of 1946 and 1947.

The substance of the eight reports together with other interpretive material has been incorporated in more popular form in the book, The Church and Christian Education, by Paul H. Vieth, published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis, for the Cooperative Publishing Association. The price is \$2.50. This book is suitable for use by lay people, by volunteer church workers, and for classroom work, as well as by professional groups.

The titles in this series of Study Committee documents are as follows:

I	Christian Education, Yesterday and Today . . . . .	.25
II	Theological and Educational Foundations . . . . .	.40
III	The Local Church Program . . . . .	.55
IV	The Curriculum of Christian Education . . . . .	.40
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VII	The Community Approach to Christian Education . . . . .	.40
VIII	The Structure and Functions of Agencies of Christian Education . . . .	.35

Price of complete set of eight \$2.75

They may be purchased through the Business Department of the International Council of Religious Education, 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois, at the prices indicated.

It is the hope of the Committee on the Study of Christian Education that these reports may be helpful in stimulating a critical re-examination of our programs of religious education in order that we may be more skillful leaders of those committed to our charge and better teachers of the Gospel.



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## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION - YESTERDAY AND TODAY

A hundred years have elapsed since Horace Bushnell's epoch-making book, Christian Nurture, was published in 1846 with its now familiar proposition that, "the child is to grow up as a Christian and never know himself as being otherwise." What would he think if he were to revisit the American scene today and witness the superstructure which has been erected upon the foundation he laid so well?

There is a sense, of course, in which Christian education is as old as Christianity itself. The Church has always shown some zeal for nurturing mature converts as well as children of the oncoming generation. This concern came to light in the catechetical instruction of the ancient Church, in books and treatises, in liturgy and sermons, in the cathedral and monastic schools of the Middle Ages, with the coming of the Reformation in catechization once again, and ever and anon in devoutly religious expressions within family-life which must have profoundly affected old and young alike.

And yet in another sense Christian education is a modern phenomenon; at least many of its institutional forms are creatures of comparatively recent years. A little reflection will show how true this statement is. The Sunday school is only 166 years old - two good long lifetimes. The Christian Endeavor Society, prototype of many youth societies and fellowships, is 65 years old, less than the allotted threescore years and ten of a man's life. The vacation school is about 46 years old, little more than half a lifetime. The weekday school is only 32 years old, less than half a lifetime. And in the technical sense religious education is a child of our own century with its spectacular developments in psychology and pedagogy.

### I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS OF MODERN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

#### 1. The Sunday School

The story properly begins with the founding of the Sunday school, for this is the agency which has borne the lion's share of the burden of Christian nurture through the years. We must therefore go back one and two-thirds centuries in time, and transport ourselves to the Old World. There in Gloucester, England, a great-hearted layman, Robert Raikes by name, a printer and publisher by trade, found the children of his city in a pitiable plight. They were ragged, dirty, profane, delinquent, underprivileged. After experimenting with other ways of bettering their condition, he thought himself of a worthy method - namely, education. And so in 1780 he gathered some of them together for a Sunday school, a school on Sunday. The venture began with four paid teachers, who shepherded these neglected children through a five-hour session each Lord's day, from ten to twelve in the morning and from one to four in the afternoon.



It is worthy of note that the Sunday school began as a lay enterprise, without benefit of clergy. It was founded by a layman, in a dwelling rather than a church, and devoid of any ecclesiastical backing. This fact explains much of subsequent history, and illumines, if it does not justify, many of the tensions between Church and Sunday school which still plague our generation.

Despite determined opposition from various quarters, Robert Raikes' venture approved itself and grew. Within five years the movement had reached the central metropolis of the land, and the Sunday School Society of London was organized. In that same year, 1785, the first Sunday school in the United States of which we have certain knowledge was instituted. And five years later still the movement had so established itself in the new world that the budding town of Philadelphia witnessed the organization of The First Day or Sunday School Society. As the years went by, Sunday school missionaries and book colporteurs carried the new institution to the American frontier with a true evangelistic passion.

All of this is not to imply that Robert Raikes was the first to call children together for a school on Sunday. Other like attempts antedated his by a number of years. But his was the prototype of a world-wide movement, so that he is rightly honored as the father of the Sunday school.

Over the years radical changes took place within this new institution. Its hours were whittled down successively until a bare sixty minutes remained (although this trend has been reversed in many instances of late). Volunteer teachers were substituted for paid instructors. The curriculum changed from the essentials of general education with some religious emphasis to religious materials exclusively. At the outset the Sunday school was for children only. The age-range was generally six to fourteen, at the conclusion of which span the pupils were customarily dismissed with the gift of a Bible. The year 1798 witnessed the real beginning of the extension of the Sunday school to youth and adults, when working women were assembled for instruction on Sunday mornings in Nottingham, England. Correspondence between two friends, the one in Bristol, England, and the other in New York City, led to the spread of this movement to America. The idea was caught up in Philadelphia especially, and eventuated in the founding in 1817 of the Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union. In due time an Adult Bible Class movement developed, which was both vigorous and wide-spread. To round out the transformation of the Sunday school, one further significant happening needs to be noted. This new agency was seized upon by the Wesleyan Revival, and made into a powerful evangelistic tool with a predominantly evangelistic spirit and emphasis. The marks of these changes still rest upon the Sunday school as we know it today.

## 2. The Youth Movement

During the same years in which the Sunday school was coming into its own, another development was taking place which was to have far-reaching effects upon Christian education. Slowly but surely a youth movement emerged within the church. Its beginnings were obscure, often unpromising, and quite varied.\*

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\* Cf. Erb, F. O., The Development of the Young People's Movement, The University of Chicago Press, 1917.

To begin with, singing-classes or schools in which youth figured prominently developed in America during the eighteenth century. There is a record of one in Boston as early as 1717. The spread of the movement is indicated by the fact that 60 singing books had been issued by 1800. These classes were the precursors of the Protestant church choir; but they also laid the ground-work for a religious youth movement, inasmuch as they brought youth together in the name of interests which were mainly religious.

A little later, temperance societies sprang up in our youthful nation to combat the ill effects of strong drink. In 1829 a thousand such organizations were counted in New York State with 100,000 members. Again youth - this time young men chiefly - were being afforded a chance to band themselves together in an idealistic effort.

When the Protestant world awoke to a new missionary enthusiasm around 1800, a wave of missionary societies swept over America. Their very names are fascinating: New York Missionary Society (1796), Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes (1800), Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society (1802), and the like. Some of the names bear testimony that young people were by no means excluded; witness the Baptist Youth's Missionary Assistant Society of New York City (1806). It appears, therefore, that the famous Haystack Meeting of 1806 was not an isolated event, but rather an outstanding item in a series which, taken together, helped to pave the way for a youth movement in Protestantism.

There were also within this period youth societies primarily devotional in nature. An old constitution of such a society has been preserved from the year 1741. One of its articles with the spelling unchanged reads as follows:

"it shall be endeavoured to spend the tow ourse frome seven to nine of every lords day evening in prayer to gathara by turnes the one to begine and the outhers to conclud the meting and betwene the tow prayers haveing a sarmon repeated whereto the singing of a psalm shall be annexed and ef after the stated exersise of the eveninge are overar if there be any residue of time we will ask one a nothare questions out of the catecism or some questions in divinity or have some religus conversation as we shall best sarve for the edefication of the socity." \*

But the most direct progenitor of the modern youth society or fellowship was the Y.M.C.A. A straight line of descent can be traced from its founding in 1844 to the first Christian Endeavor Society. In the drapery house of George Hitchcock and Sons in London twelve young men under the leadership of George Williams founded a Young Men's Christian Association. This furnished both the impetus and the pattern for other like organizations. But it remained for the movement to be domesticated within the local church. This further step was taken in 1860 by Dr. Theodore Cuyler, pastor of the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian



Church of Brooklyn, when he set up a Y.M.C.A. - type of youth organization within his own congregation. The line of descent is next picked up in the Milliston Congregational Church of Portland, Maine, whose pastor was the Rev. Francis E. Clark. Stimulated by an account written by Dr. Cuyler, he brought into being in 1881 among his own young people a Christian Endeavor Society. Interestingly enough, the first pledge of this first society was closely akin to the pledge of a mission study circle which Mrs. Clark had organized a few years previously.

The first society was followed by a second in Massachusetts the same year. With incredible rapidity, as though it had been born in the fulness of time, the movement spread to England, Australia, Germany, and throughout our own country. By 1887 there were 7,000 or more societies with almost 500,000 members, and Dr. Clark found himself leaving his pastorate to pilot the new enterprise which he had so auspiciously launched.

Many hoped that Christian Endeavor would become the all-sufficient youth agency within all denominations, but they were doomed to disappointment. In 1889 the Epworth League was formed out of already existing Methodist societies. Two years later the Baptist Young People's Union federated the societies of that denomination. Within more recent years quite a few communions have constituted strong youth fellowships, which bind their young people together in a common program and purpose.

We have to move well into the present century to find the youth of many denominations once more drawing together decisively in joint effort. The first meeting of the Christian Youth Council of North America was held in 1930, and four years thereafter its program assumed definite form under the caption, "Christian Youth Building a New World." Today the United Christian Youth Movement is an assured fact, with high promise for the days ahead.

A recent development of large significance is the youth summer camp and summer-conference movement. It has been estimated that in the summer of 1944 church camps and conferences in the number of 3,000 were held, with an attendance of half a million or more.

### 3. Vacation and Weekday Church Schools

When the Sunday school was reduced generally to a single scant hour and religious instruction virtually eliminated from the public school system, it was inevitable that sooner or later the sense of need for more time would become acute. One obvious answer to this need was the wasted - and worse than wasted - summer months when public school was not in session. It is difficult to assign credit definitely for the first vacation church school. There was one in Montreal, Canada in 1877, and another in Elk Mound, Wisconsin around 1900. But the real beginning of the movement was located in New York City, starting tentatively in the closing years of the last century and blossoming out in 1901 in five schools under the leadership of Dr. Robert G. Boville. The new movement grew apace for it met a genuine need, particularly in large cities. In 1911 the International Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools was formed, later to be subsumed under the International Council of Religious Education.



The first weekday church school was held in Gary, Indiana in the year 1914. The immediate setting was a unique school program in Gary which preempted almost all the daylight hours of the children in work, play, and study. The progressive superintendent of schools was more than willing to share this time with the churches, and negotiations with the pastors of the community led to the founding of a weekday school of religious Bible study in high school for credit had already been tried out in Colorado and North Dakota, but here was something different, constituting an authentic new beginning. The weekday church school movement spread in its initial stages through the midwest largely, then suffered a set-back during the depression, and has recently come to life with a bound throughout the nation.

#### 4. Overhead Organizations of Religious Education

Mention has already been made of the founding of The Sunday School Society of London and The First Day or Sunday School Society of Philadelphia within five and ten years respectively of the origin of the Sunday school. As things turned out, these establishments were to prove merely the first-born of many brethren. A perfectly natural next step was the organization in 1824 of the American Sunday School Union, which was to prove so untiring in the promotion of Sunday schools and Sunday school work throughout our nation. In 1832 was held the first of a succession of great National Sunday School Conventions, which were destined to become International in 1875 with the addition of delegates from the sister-nation of Canada. The Executive Committee which served ad interim between conventions was finally incorporated in 1907 as the International Sunday School Association. Meanwhile a comparable form of organization was being set up throughout smaller geographical units - state and county associations.

The important thing to note in this amazing story is the organizational pattern which was being established. It was territorial, rather than ecclesiastical. Sunday school enthusiasts within a given area united regardless of denomination to promote the common cause. They came to the conventions and served in the various offices not as officially delegated representatives of the several denominations, but merely as interested individuals. It cannot be doubted that there was great good in this course of development; for here was the ecumenical spirit at work long before the word itself was in common usage in Christian circles. But there was also the possibility of harm. These geographical organizations, large and small, were not responsible to the Protestant denominations of America. They could scarcely be conceived as clearing-houses through which the denominations could pool their strength and formulate a program that expressed their wills. Rather these unions and associations were in constant danger of being a movement outside the constituted denominations, with a genius of its own, its own goals, its own programs, its own study materials, its own hymnals, its own life. Here too is an historical explanation, though not a justification, of the gulf which has sometimes widened between Church and Sunday school.

The denominations, of course, began to constitute quite early their respective agencies for Sunday school work. As early as 1790 the Methodist Conference in Charleston, South Carolina, gave the infant Sunday school movement its official blessing. Denominational unions and publishing-houses were active from about 1830 on, and in the early years of the present century they seem to have attached their task with renewed vigor. It was not until 1910 - quite late in the game - that they drew together in the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations. Now there were two overhead organizations covering the same area but organized on different principles, the International Sunday School Association and the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations. After a discreet but persistent courtship these two were happily married in 1922, and soon thereafter adopted the present familiar name of the International Council of Religious Education. Since that day the major Protestant denominations of the United States and Canada have used this agency with large success as their meeting-ground and planning-body for the concerns of Christian education common to them all. At the same time the smaller territorial units, state associations and councils, have not been orphaned; for they too are fully represented in the International Council of Religious Education.

An agency of different spirit and purpose is the Religious Education Association, organized in 1903. The prime mover in this case was Dr. William Rainey Harper, the noted Hebrew scholar and president of the University of Chicago. As one might well suppose of an organization with such a founder, one of its major interests has been the attempt to make all education religious, and all religion educational. The Religious Education Association has been composed largely of professional religious educators - Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish. It has been liberal in theological and educational outlook, and its journal has been the technical house-organ of the religious education fellowship.

### 5. Curricular Developments

The life blood of education of any sort is the curriculum. It is a fascinating study to follow the successive curricular stages through which the Sunday school has gone in the course of its lifetime.

In the first instance, or as soon at least as the Sunday school settled down to become solely an agency of religious instruction, its curriculum consisted substantially of the Bible and the catechism. The method employed was simplicity itself - memorization of as much as possible without any special attempt at either selection or interpretation of the portions to be memorized. Amazing feats of memory are on record from these early days, such as the recitation by a pupil of the Bible from Genesis to Isaiah, or the whole of the four gospels.

Any observer could have predicted that sooner or later the inherent faults of such a system would become manifest, and this was indeed the case. The turning point came around 1825. At this time a beginning was made in the selection of lessons from the Bible, and also in the issuance of sets of questions to help teachers draw out the meaning from the portions selected. Perhaps the most famous of the publications of this type was the Union Questions issued by the American Sunday School Union.



But what one could do, all could do; so that quite soon the denominational publishing houses became active in this field. The resultant confusion has for many years been known by the rather dubious label, "The Babel Series," whose very chaos prepared the way for the advent of Uniform Lessons. This worthy goal, like all others, was not achieved at a single bound; but after some preliminary agitation by great-statured pioneers like the Rev. John H. Vincent, the International Sunday School Convention of Indianapolis in 1872 set up an International Lesson Committee which for more than half a century was to be one of the most influential bodies in Protestantism.

The use of the new lessons presented an inspiring spectacle - Sunday schools from coast to coast throughout all denominations studying the same lesson on a given Sunday. A traveler could drop into any Sunday school anywhere at any time and find himself at home. But now an opposite difficulty arose. People of all ages were in attendance at Sunday school, but there was one invariable, unyielding lesson-scripture for young and old alike. Again a thoughtful observer could have foreseen that the pressure for Graded Lessons would come chiefly from workers with children, for it was the children who felt most the heavy hand of uniformity. As early as 1890 graded materials were published by the Rev. Erastus Blakeslee. It was not until 1908, however, that the International Lesson Committee and the International Sunday School Convention gave their full approval to the principle of gradation in the field of curriculum. During the years since then, graded lessons of one sort or another have largely supplanted the uniform lessons for children; but the uniform materials still reign supreme with adults, and to a lesser extent with young people.

A significant step forward was taken in the years around 1930. The curriculum-problem became the province of the newly formed Educational Commission of the International Council of Religious Education. This body rendered several distinct services. It viewed the curriculum of Christian education in unified and integrated fashion, combining Sunday school, vacation church school, and the like into a single perspective; it developed a philosophy of the curriculum which was avowedly experience-centered; and through the publication of The Curriculum Guide it furnished direction and help to countless people engaged in the actual task of writing curricular materials. The influence of this venture is still felt among us.

The latest chapter in the story of curricular development began to be written in 1939, when the International Council of Religious Education took steps to survey the curricular field afresh, and draft policies and plans accordingly. Three related committees emerged - one on the Uniform Series, another on the Graded Series, and a third on a Curriculum Guide for the use of advanced schools which desire to shape their own curricula. A new pattern for the Uniform Series has already resulted at this writing, and other practical achievements will no doubt follow.

## 6. Leadership Training

The initial impulse for the training of Sunday school teachers was derived from the examples set in the public school field. The first



state normal school within the United States was instituted at Lexington, Massachusetts in 1839; and by 1860 when our nation was on the verge of being torn asunder by civil war nine states possessed such schools. During the same general period there was a parallel development of teachers' institutes. Inescapably the question arose, "Why should not something of the same sort be done within the Sunday school?" The Rev. John H. Vincent, who pioneered in so many phases of Christian education, started a normal class for his own Sunday school teachers in 1857. And Dr. Tyng, another of the notable names from this period, could say in 1866 that for a long time he had been meeting weekly with his teachers to study the Sunday school lesson.

The typical course of training during the latter part of the nineteenth century comprised fifty lessons, each of which was developed in mere skeleton-form with a minimum of flesh and blood covering the bones. Despite the measurable good accomplished by such texts, they were obviously inadequate. It seems that to begin with they were not intended to be studied, but rather to serve as guides or outlines for the teacher's use in lecturing. By a strange quirk of fortune they were diverted to a different purpose, for which they were poorly fitted. The death-blow to all such texts was struck by Dr. Athearn in a pungent report before the International Sunday School Convention of 1914. He pointed out for example that the whole topic of "memory" was covered in three lines in one text, and 12 lines in another. A strong reaction ensued, and within a few years publishers began bringing out study-courses comprising 120 lessons typically, developed with greater length and in more satisfactory manner than had formerly been the case.

Since that day the leadership training curriculum has undergone numerous revisions. The whole scheme of courses has been overhauled several times; curricula on several levels of difficulty have been devised to meet various types of need and ability; and in general a continuous effort has been made to draft a leadership training program which will actually train leaders.

All of the foregoing is oriented primarily toward the lay-worker. Within our own century a new profession arose - that of the Director of Religious Education; and serious efforts were begun to train prospective ministers in the disciplines of religious education. In 1902 Dr. J. L. Cuninggim came to the Theological Department of Vanderbilt University, and became the organizer of a department of religious education in that school. The first institution whose primary purpose was the development of professional leaders in this new field was the Hartford School of Religious Pedagogy, founded in 1903. The Divinity School of the University of Chicago is credited with being one of the first theological seminaries to establish a chair of religious education. Teachers College of Columbia University began to award graduate degrees with a major in religious education in 1911. Other pioneering ventures in the training of a professional leadership were the Department of Religious Education at Union Theological Seminary in New York, and the School of Religious Education at Boston University.

The new profession and its occupants have abundantly vindicated themselves. Directors of Religious Education have never been numerous, (there are now perhaps a thousand serving in Protestant churches.) The

demand for them in the nature of the case fluctuates with the economic cycle, and also with changes in mood and emphasis in theology and church-life. But it is safe to say we would not and could not return to the day when religious education leadership signified only laymen devoting some surplus time out of their busy lives to this tremendous enterprise.

## 7. In Conclusion

It is impossible in brief compass to touch upon every aspect of the story of Christian education in recent times. Nothing has been said, for example, about men's and women's organizations within the local church, missionary education, or Scout troops and 4-H Clubs, or the development of departments of religion in colleges and universities. But perhaps enough detail has been given to indicate how we have arrived where we are in Christian education, and to enable us to draw hope and courage for tomorrow from the steadfast devotion of yesterday.

## II. REASONS FOR THIS DEVELOPMENT

Church historians a hundred or five hundred years from now will doubtless look back upon the ideas, practices, and organizations which together make up Christian education, and inquire why such a development occurred in America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Why not Germany in the sixteenth century? Or France in the eighteenth century? What combination of circumstances brought to flower this particular type of religious expression at this particular time and place? If we may anticipate the historians of the future, several answers to this question may be found.

### 1. The Great Awakening

In the middle of the eighteenth century the religious life of America was tremendously quickened and revived under the powerful preaching of George Whitefield and others, and the last decade of the same century saw the beginning of a second wave of revival. It is more than coincidence that the first of these movements came just before the founding of the Sunday school, and the second during the very years when the Sunday school began to spread in America. The Great Awakening prepared men's hearts for a new interest in the things of the spirit. The Sunday school became both its beneficiary and its vehicle.

### 2. A Secularized Public School System

Clearly this is a second and obvious answer - the emergence of a public school system from which religion was all but totally excluded, so that the responsibility of religious education came to rest principally upon the Church, and a way of meeting the responsibility simply had to be discovered. The years 1750 - 1800 were the period in which secular texts gradually crowded out the religious texts from the school of this nation. We sometimes forget that the clear-cut line of demarcation between religious education and general education which we in America take for granted has been virtually unknown throughout the rest of the world. In fact the assertion may be ventured that only one other nation has squeezed religion out of general education with a thoroughness matching or exceeding our own - namely, the Communist regime of Russia.



Beyond doubt, one major reason for this secularization of the public school was the gradual secularization of American life in general. But there were other reasons. Our founding fathers were impelled by a fierce passion for liberty, which eyed askance every potential form of tyranny, political or ecclesiastical. Hence, they insisted early and late, and rightly so, upon the principle of the separation of church and state. Furthermore, the American people found themselves beset by a multiplicity of sects without parallel in any other land or place. To all the denominational forms which immigrants brought hither with them from many countries, there were added a wealth of new ones rooted in American soil. In the face of differences so many and so sharp, it is no wonder that our forefathers gave up the attempt to keep religion within the developing public school.

If it had been kept, things would have been materially different. But since it was not so kept, other ways had to be found of doing what needed to be done. Hence the eagerness with which Sunday school, vacation school, and all the rest were seized upon and cultivated.

### 3. The Typical American Confidence in Human Effort

The movement of Christian education with all its ramifications betrays unmistakably the conviction that man's efforts are worth while, that they count for something, that they are not an impertinence but a necessity in God's providential scheme for life. The American temper was especially congenial to such a conviction and such a movement. The settlers of this continent were venturesome folk, or they would never have come here in the first instance. The hardships of pioneer life necessitated, and the rich rewards invited the continuance of this hardy self-reliance. It would have been strange indeed if this mood had not crept into the religious expressions of American life. Christian education is one of the best evidences that it did creep in.

### 4. The Achievement of Universal Education

From 1825 to 1850 the great Horace Mann assumed the lead in the establishment of free American public schools. In no other land or time has as much education been available to as many people as in our own land and age. The education offered is not perfect, and absolute equality of opportunity is yet to be achieved; but a great democratic ideal has been measurably realized. We do well to remember that in the country which is both our mother and our sister, England, the term "public school" still means private school; and the late William Temple held as one of his major goals the wider extension of educational opportunity among the youth of his native land.

The example of the American public school could not but have its effect within the sphere of Christian education. What was desirable and possible within one realm would tend to be regarded as equally desirable and equally possible in another. Similarly, the educational philosophy wrought out within the secular field could not fail to make itself felt within Christian education. Hence, again, the avidity of response to the various agencies of Christian education as they presented themselves within the framework of American life.



## 5. Psychological Study and Research

It would be foolish to assert that America enjoys a monopoly in the field of psychology. Vienna is peculiarly the home of psychoanalysis, and Germany of the Gestalt psychology. France, England, and Russia have all made indispensable contributions to this branch of science. But it is safe to affirm that nowhere else has psychology been so devoutly worshipped or confidently followed as in America. And it is a very short step from psychology, the science of man, to pedagogy, the art of developing man in wholesome directions. And once more we touch upon a secret of why Christian education developed here and now.

There is no mystery, then, in the fact that religious education in its technical sense was contemporaneous with epochal developments in educational psychology and the psychology of religion. We recall that Starbuck's The Psychology of Religion was published in 1899; Coe's The Spiritual Life in 1900; James' famous Varieties of Religious Experience in 1902; Dewey's The Child and the Curriculum in the same year; and further that this was the precise period in which Thorndike, the dean of American educational psychologists, was beginning his work. It is by no means accidental that scientific religious education, properly speaking, originated at the same time and in the same land which witnessed these stirrings of new life in psychology.

## 6. The Large Place of Laymen in American Church Life

The very genius of Protestantism shies away from identifying the Church with a clerical hierarchy, and assigns to the laity a real and significant place in the Church and its life. The fundamental Protestant doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers could have no other consequence. But this trend has been carried especially far in American Protestantism. Doubtless the ideals of equality and democracy are once again the proper explanation. At all events, the trend is clear.

And the relevance of such a tendency to the growth of Christian education is equally unmistakable. For the Sunday school, the youth society, the men's brotherhood, the women's auxiliary - all of these are democratic lay expressions within the life of the Church. They represent the people, all the people, interested and at work. In fact, someone has called the Sunday school the greatest lay movement within Protestantism.

And so from yet another vantage-point we find the American soil a particularly apt seed-bed for the growth of the movement of Christian education.

## III. ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE MOVEMENT

No one can presume to estimate the hours of labor and the millions of dollars which have been poured into Christian education during the century that is past. Has the game been worth the candle? Many an humble, faithful church school worker has had his doubts, particularly after a morning when the room was too hot or too cold, the pupils unusually restless, and the results apparently nil. Some ministers and high-placed churchmen, who for one reason or another were unsympathetic to Christian education, have likewise voiced their skepticism - sometimes in words that sear and

burn. And even those of us who have devoted our lives professionally to this cause have had our misgivings, when we saw the glaring defects of our work, or witnessed the world falling apart before our eyes in contradiction of everything we had taught and despite everything that we or any others could do. With full acknowledgment of all the mistakes that have been made in the name of Christian education, either of omission or of commission, let us look nevertheless at the record of positive achievements, and take courage.

### 1. Statistical Growth

Nothing on this earth long continues and continues to grow unless in some degree it accords with the deepest purposes of god and man. For a brief while, yes; but not for long! What, then, is the verdict given by statistics? A 1943 report of the Department of Research of the International Council of Religious Education offers a summary of Sunday school membership within 258 religious bodies in the United States. Eliminating Buddhists, Jews, and Roman Catholics, we have a total of 21,693,005 pupils - a very sizable number. Comparable figures for 1945 secured from the same source, indicate a number about the same, 21,461,423. These same church bodies enrolled in 1943, 2,438,168 children in Vacation Church Schools, and in 1945, a somewhat smaller number, 2,053,047. Dr. E. L. Shaver in an article of September, 1943 made a conservative estimate that 1,000 American communities in 40 states were then releasing 1,000,000 or more children for weekday religious education. (This seems to include others than Protestants, but not classes held after school hours, or religious classes within the public school curriculum as in North Carolina.)

Statistics such as these are both a vindication of the past, and a measure of the opportunity for spiritual influence which is ours in the present. The story they tell is both heartening and challenging. Every now and then somebody proposes quite lightly that the Sunday school be abolished on the ground that it is outmoded. Certainly changes are needed, but before abolition is decreed it would seem advisable to be sure that something better can be provided spiritually for those more than twenty millions of pupils.

### 2. Constant Feeding of Members in the Church

There is no way of knowing how many Protestant church members have come by way of the Sunday school, the vacation school, the youth fellowship, and the other instrumentalities of Christian education. Unfortunately, church statistics of accessions to membership do not describe the prior religious pilgrimage of the new members. But the experience of most ministers and congregations would suggest that the great majority of members of the Church were first members of some "school" under the auspices of the Church.

Or, let us turn the matter around and look at it from the other side. Of the many boys and girls in America who are not at this moment receiving any religious instruction, how many will become active, intelligent, whole-souled church members? Fifty per cent? Twenty per cent? Ten per cent? Occasionally the opinion is expressed that the Sunday school stands in the way of church attendance, and that improvement might be noted if the Sunday school were done away with. Suppose that every Sunday school

in America were closed today; does anyone imagine that the result would be a sudden rush to attend the services of the sanctuary, or a wholesale clamoring for admission to church membership? The bitter opposite would far more likely be true.

### 3. Considerable Success in Holding Childhood, Youth, and Adulthood to Christianity

When we think of those we have lost or never had, we are consumed with remorse and regret. But when we remember those we have contrived to hold fast to the Christian fellowship and the Christian faith, we have cause for rejoicing. A comparison of our situation with other countries - unworthy as such an approach may be - suggests that we might have done a good deal worse. American youth are not lost to Christianity as are German youth. To be sure, our young people have not been subjected to the same high-pressure appeals; if they had, would they have yielded to the same degree? The point in such a comparison is not at all that we are to take unholy satisfaction in defections from other portions of Christ's Church Universal; but merely that we may derive some reenforcement of courage by setting what we have managed to do over against the actualities in other parts of the world.

One point more in this connection: Critics sometimes assert that our numbers might be larger were it not for innovations in curriculum, method, grading, et cetera. It is true that sometimes too many changes too rapidly made confuse and alienate people. But there is a strong probability that the numbers might have been considerably smaller if Christian education had not striven zealously to improve constantly their lesson materials, teaching methods, and organizational plans. Would the Sunday school of 1900 hold the youth of 1950?

### 4. Service Outlets for Thousands of Lay People

The Sunday schools of America are staffed by approximately two million persons, most of whom are unpaid, non-professional laymen and lay women. Add to this the very considerable numbers serving as vacation church school teachers, youth fellowship counselors, club leaders, and the like; and the result is an impressive array of Christian folk who have discovered within the agencies of Christian education an opportunity to find their souls by losing them. Entirely apart from the worth of Christian education to those who have been led, what of its worth to those who have done the leading? Where could they locate equivalent opportunities for Christian service, equally rich and equally numerous?

### 5. Contributions to the Understanding and Practice of Church Work in General

Above and beyond the auxiliaries which are commonly thought of when Christian education is mentioned, the movement - particularly in its more recent forms - has left its mark on almost everything done in the Church and in its name. Pastoral work has reached a new level of spiritual efficiency with the counseling insights born of psychology. The problem-



sermon, addressed to some pressing moral or religious issue facing the members of the audience, is a type which has found its way into books on homiletics and into the practice of some of our most noted preachers. It, too, traces its ancestry, in part at least, to Christian education. The conduct of many an official board meeting nowadays embodies a democratic approach which reflects the discussion technique. There is nothing strange in all of this. Whatever is truly sound from 9:30 to 10:30 is equally sound from 10:45 to 11:45 or at any other time.

#### 6. Promotion of Interdenominational Cooperation

To choose a single example out of many, the Protestant denominations of Canada have been promoting intermediate and senior programs cooperatively for more than a quarter of a century. And for thousands of laymen, lay women, and young people in both the United States and Canada it is literally true that their only experience thus far in meeting and working with members of other denominations has been within the agencies and interests of Christian education. Not a few ministers and other professional workers could bear the same testimony. For, as has already been pointed out, the organizations and programs of Christian education have cut across denominational lines from the very beginning. They anticipated the present ecumenical movement by a hundred years. If the ecumenical Church now becomes a reality, the reason in considerable part will lie within the societies, associations, and councils which have persistently united Protestants of every name and sign for the performance of the great task of Christian nurture.

These are some of the achievements of Christian education. It would be sheer folly to close our eyes to past and present weaknesses and mistakes. But it would be ingratitude towards both God and man to develop a blind-spot towards the heartwarming gains that have been registered through the years.

# THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## II

### THEOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

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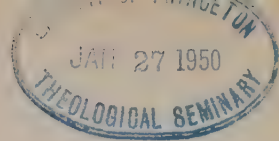
THE COMMITTEE ON THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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## PREFACE

This document is one of eight reports issued by the Committee on the Study of Christian Education to the International Council of Religious Education. The committee was established by Council action at the Annual Meeting in February, 1944, with Dr. Paul H. Vieth of the Yale University Divinity School as chairman, Dr. Nevin C. Harner, now President of Heidelberg College, as vice-chairman, and Dr. Gerald E. Knoff of the International Council staff as executive secretary.

The committee interpreted its task as that of presenting its final reports as independent findings, addressed to the Council rather than as reports which necessarily had to have Council approval. The Council found itself in complete agreement with this understanding and took specific action to that effect at the Annual Meeting of 1945.

Some of these reports were presented to the Council at the February 1946 Annual Meeting; others were presented in 1947. All of the documents have been presented to the International Council though they are not to be interpreted necessarily as the findings of the Council.

Some of the recommendations have been formally adopted by Council action; others have been received for study and later action, as will be shown in the minutes of the International Council for the Annual Meetings of 1946 and 1947.

The substance of the eight reports together with other interpretive material has been incorporated in more popular form in the book, The Church and Christian Education, by Paul H. Vieth, published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis, for the Cooperative Publishing Association. The price is \$2.50. This book is suitable for use by lay people, by volunteer church workers, and for classroom work, as well as by professional groups.



The titles in this series of Study Committee documents are as follows:

I	Christian Education, Yesterday and Today . . . . .	.25
II	Theological and Educational Foundations . . . . .	.40
III	The Local Church Program . . . . .	.55
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Price of complete set of eight \$2.75

They may be purchased through the Business Department of the International Council of Religious Education, 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois, at the prices indicated.

It is the hope of the Committee on the Study of Christian Education that these reports may be helpful in stimulating a critical re-examination of our programs of religious education in order that we may be more skillful leaders of those committed to our charge and better teachers of the Gospel.

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## THEOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

### FOREWORD

This statement has been formulated for the International Council of Religious Education and its constituent bodies to assist in the clarification of fundamental principles and objectives. There has been no thought of laying down an orthodoxy to which all must conform. Throughout the statement the attempt has been made to give full recognition to divergent understandings of our faith and different convictions on educational procedures. It would be too much to expect that the syntheses here suggested will be universally acceptable. There must be continued provision for the exchange and discussion of differing convictions in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect. Any attempt to standardize all Protestant practice would be a contradiction in terms. It is of the essence of our fellowship that we recognize the common Christian aims in variant forms of religious education and refrain from claiming exclusive validity for our own.

The purpose has rather been to stimulate a re-examination of convictions in order that we may together face the demands of this hour with a fresh sense of mission and a renewed grip upon what is essential. At the same time that the Western world is puzzled by the problem of re-educating Nazi youth, Christian leaders in England are speaking of their need for re-evangelizing the British Isles. The same need is to be found with us, but any effort at Christian advance which does not rest on firm educational foundations will be superficial and impermanent. In the forward movement to which we are called, may this analysis come not as a provocation to debate but as a guide to labors which may be more worthy of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Christian education is the process by which human lives, in their potentiality and need, are controlled by the Christian gospel. Because it deals with persons in their uniqueness and differences, it is individual. Because it seeks to relate their lives to the Christian community, it is social. Because it introduces growing persons to our religious heritage, it must deal with the past. Because it cultivates creative experience, it is ever oriented toward the future.



A study of the basic foundations of Christian education calls for the examination of three main fields: (1) the nature of man, viewed both in his essential character and in relation to the special situation of the present time; (2) the faith of the church and problems in its teaching; (3) the fundamental principles of educational procedure, which show how people learn, particularly in their religious development.

## I. THE NATURE OF MAN

Christian education is concerned with the development of individuals into mature religious persons, beginning with the boys and girls who are born into our communities. Biology shows us that they start with certain inherited capacities and basic human needs. There are differences in native endowment, but these are difficult to measure because from the start the human individual is subject to varied influences from the environment in which he is placed. Some of this conditioning is deliberately undertaken to attain certain desired ends of society. Much more is unconscious as the accepted patterns of life are appropriated or the individual reacts against them. The primary needs of man have a rather definite physical basis and are present in all individuals. The secondary needs are greatly influenced by education and culture.

An enormous amount of research has been devoted to the various aspects of the development of persons. Some students have concentrated upon the physiological factors. Others have turned their attention to psychological investigation. Still others have emphasized sociological influences upon man. The empirical data usually have been gathered with no religious assumptions or from a frankly naturalistic viewpoint.

Christian education, on the other hand, is based upon definite affirmations about human nature which were originally expressed in pre-scientific terminology. Very much is to be learned from the modern attempts to study man by methodologies which are scientifically controlled. No Christian educator may neglect these data. Wide areas of agreement are found between

the secular and the religious student. Both stress the potentiality of man: both admit great limitations. Where there appears to be disagreement, the Christian educator is faced with the question of how far traditional assumptions must be modified; the investigator should also consider whether he has left out any relevant evidence.

### 1. The Dual Nature of Man

That man is teachable has been the emphasis growing out of psychological study. As a rational being, he can be appealed to on the level of his intelligence. From the Enlightenment came confidence in the improvement of man through the use of his own powers. The Romantic Movement went further and emphasized the innate goodness of man. He could be trusted to decide and to do the right, if only he could be freed from the corrupting influences in the social scene. Hence, men could face life with confidence in themselves. The Enlightenment and the Romantic Movement gave the basis for a firm belief in human progress, for man possessed within himself the resources to attain his goals. It was a view which glorified man and all his works.

While these developments had their influence in the United States and many accepted the doctrine of the inevitability of progress, upon the whole the instinct theory as to the nature of man was dominant in psychology. According to this theory, man is endowed with inborn patterns or tendencies for behavior. Some of these are social, others anti-social. Thus man, according to this view, is born with a dual nature. Hope in developing desirable human beings was based upon human teachableness. It was believed that through education it was possible to repress or redirect the anti-social instincts and to foster the social ones. While both evil and good tendencies are found in man, he has the capacity to reject the evil and choose the good. Accordingly, he is able to respond with devotion to moral ideals when their desirableness is shown. Thus, there was confidence in the possibility, though not in the inevitability, of human progress.

But alongside these optimistic views, a more tragic picture has been presented by other investigators. They insist that reason determines only a small part of human activity. They point to man's infinite capacity to rationalize his self-interest. Deep-lying passions of which the individual often is not conscious determine conduct. Hence, he easily becomes a civil war of conflicting impulses. The history of the race shows a creature who has been predatory, deceitful, and cruel. When biological impulses come into conflict with conscience, dangerous repressions may develop. Neurotic tendencies are widespread among us, indicating a sickness that needs to be healed as well as an intelligence to be informed and a will to be summoned to moral activity.

Christian faith also looks upon man from a two-fold point of view. First of all, he is a child of God, made in the divine image. As such, he is aware of moral responsibility. Within the bounds of human limitations, he is capable of thinking God's thoughts after him and of seeking to do his will. He experiences a sense of guilt, for God's law is written in his heart. Though extremely small in contrast to the vastness of the universe, he is capable of predicting the movements of the stars. He bows in worship before his Maker and finds eternity implanted in his heart. He repeats with Augustine, "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless until they repose in thee." Such a child of God is subject to nurture within the divine family.

But man is also a fallen creature. The divine image has been marred, explain it as we will. There are tendencies to evil in human nature itself so that when man is left to himself he does not find salvation. Human life contains more than the social injustice which appears when it is viewed in a horizontal dimension. Man is alienated from God by the rebellion of his sin; he denies his true nature by his sensuality and his pride; he is prone to make himself the primary object of worship, confusing the copy with the original. Man stands in need of deliverance as well as the instruction of his intellect. Something must be done for him. To exhort him to marshal his own resources is not enough.

The modern Religious Education Movement in its early days in this country had a confident belief in the possibilities of Christian nurture for the realization of Christian personality and the achievement of a more Christian social order. In this confidence it was in line with the beliefs of general education that in and through adequate educational procedures the possibilities of man could be developed. The dominant liberal theology of this period also embodied this optimistic view of man. The theological reaction which has pointed again to the more tragic aspects of the human situation has been a disturbing challenge to the assumptions which underlay programs of Christian nurture. One of the greatest needs of religious educators today is to restore the proper balance between these two truths. We should never give up the conviction that we are dealing with the children of God who are growing up within the body of Christ. Man can be sinful only because he is a child of God. On the other hand, the empirical investigations which lay bare man's brutality and pride, his sensuality and neurotic characteristics, lend strong confirmation to what the theologians were trying to express through the doctrine of original sin. A sound program of religious education must take into consideration this dual nature of man.



## 2. Permanent Aspects of Man's Predicament

The human predicament possesses permanent aspects which are relatively unaffected by the civilization of the hour. The first is man's mortality. Does life on this planet, inevitably limited, circumscribe his existence, or does his being have ampler dimensions? A second is his obvious dependence upon nature. Does it contain powers to be appeased? Is it a sphere for his mastery? Is it a ground of existence which is friendly to those who approach it with a humble spirit of understanding? Or again, is man to seek adjustment to the patterns of his existing culture, or is there a more ultimate framework of existence?

Such problems arise in every society. Man is not a problem to himself because of the world in which he lives but because of his own nature. The impediment is not outside but inside. There is an inner conflict prior to the particular form arising from the immediate social situation. Our civilization may increase the basic conflicts, but it is not their ultimate cause. Sometimes the tension is between knowing and doing; sometimes it is between willing and doing. Not all cry out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" but something of this plight is to be found at all times. The forms of sinful conduct change, but they find abiding roots in our selfishness and pride. The progress of civilization does not bring salvation. It may only make the problems more difficult and complex.

## 3. Special Phases of Our Civilization

It should not be strange, therefore, that in our own time new and difficult strains have been added by the material and social conditions of our civilization. The business of growing up is always tense and precarious, but in our modern age, it is doubly so. We shall sketch six aspects of the present situation which profoundly affect developing persons of today and then consider some of the psychological results which deeply affect the problem of Christian education in our time.

- (1) Our world is one in which scientific knowledge and technological invention move forward with geometric progression. The stimulus of war far exceeded the lure of profit in promoting new discoveries. Jet propulsion, rockets, and radar all were prophetic of a new era. But the release of atomic power has thrown all other discoveries in the shade. Mankind is literally stunned by the potentialities at his command. The event at Hiroshima raises the terrible fear that this power heralds the twilight of civilization rather than any Utopia, for there is little sign of the moral

and spiritual discipline to use these possibilities for the common good. If an atomic age cannot attain such discipline, its doom is sealed.

- (2) These inventions have brought the annihilation of spatial barriers, and made rapid communication between all parts of the globe a realized achievement. But this increasing interdependence has not destroyed our spiritual isolationism or divisive policies. In the face of the inescapable need for world unity, there continues a jealous dependence upon preponderance of force. Important instruments of power are very grudgingly assigned to international agencies.
- (3) Our technical advances have also made possible a tremendous multiplication of goods. The enjoyment of economic plenty has been placed within the reach of men by the unlocking of undreamed resources of the earth. At the same time, men have not learned how to distribute this production with justice for all. Neither have they found a way to keep all men at work except for purposes of destruction or else by the destruction of individual freedom.
- (4) The very mechanization of our economic life has brought with it a threat to the social meaningfulness of the work of many. A sense of vocation is difficult to maintain in the midst of the repetitive processes accompanying our machinery. Difficult moral dilemmas are presented by the impersonal relations which are created. Fewer men and women can know the joy of workmanship or experience the educative influence of creative craftsmanship.
- (5) Amid the increasing mechanization of life, our Western culture has become largely secularized. Eastern cultures are also fast losing their religious bases. The need for an organizing focus of loyalty has found expression in political and economic substitutes for the historic religions of mankind. Ideologies of race and class have become idols demanding absolute devotion. Loss of faith is a disturbing mark of our time and uncertainty of aim is an inevitable result.
- (6) In the midst of this civilization, Christian principles appear to many to be alien and impractical. They stand in antithesis to those upon which the world lays emphasis, with its devotion to success rather than integrity, to force rather than good will, to cleverness rather than faithfulness, to selfishness rather than sacrifice. When irresponsibility becomes the rule, selves and societies disintegrate. The contrast between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world was seldom more sharply drawn.

#### 4. The Resultant Personal Strains

We would not ignore the aspects of the current scene which are distinctly favorable to Christian objectives. Never was the world more conscious of its desperate need for unity. There is an increased awareness of social injustice and racial discrimination which is the first step in their alleviation. Nevertheless, in our acquisitive, competitive society the forces described have conspired to produce a type of personality with aggravated ills. We shall describe six of the psychological effects which seem to be most widespread.

- (1) Deep cleavages fissure almost all phases of our social life, separating races, classes, religions, political parties, the age levels, labor and management, and the adherents of our competing ideologies. There is no accepted unity of life. Democracy degenerates into the clash of social groups instead of evoking a united devotion to the common good.
- (2) A psychological consequence of these cleavages is a preponderance of feelings of hostility over feelings of friendliness and cooperation. Our very fellowships are formed on the basis of common antagonisms. Sec-tarian antipathies cover every field so that we become inhibited from showing hostility where it is really needed for preservation. In such an atmosphere, ap-peals to the sufficiency of the golden rule to solve our problems sound pathetically irrelevant.
- (3) These divisions bring an emotional aloneness to mil-lions of people. There is a lack of "belonging," even in the groups of which we are a part. Insecurity is the result, even in those groups to which men turn for companionship. Part of the appeal of Fascism lay in its claim to give status to the individual who stood by himself amid crushing defeat.
- (4) An increase of anxiety is a further accompaniment of the spiritual isolation of our time. Despair fills the lives of many who are in the grip of mental an-guish. They know a "sickness unto death." The fears which weaken the effective conduct of life stand in marked contrast to the faith which should belong to the spirit of a man whose religion has brought inner peace.
- (5) To compensate for this aloneness and anxiety, we find tremendous absorption in external activities. There is an over-concern with income, power, prestige, rank, and recognition. The struggle to get ahead and keep ahead seems to be aggravated by a deep doubt as to man's own intrinsic worth. Distractions are imperative



in order to escape the necessity of being alone.  
That might reveal the spiritual bankruptcy within.

- (6) A contrary tendency for the less energetic is to withdraw and run away from the struggle that appears too hard. This takes on a wide variety of forms: in commercialized amusements, in sexual and alcoholic excesses, in chronic illness, and even in types of religious emotion. Amid more sophisticated groups there is a turning to Bohemianism and aestheticism. Others run away from the unideal present by absorption in some golden age of the past. These are all techniques of escape and evasion rather than recreation for the task at hand.

##### 5. Interpretations of the Contemporary Predicament

Secular investigators look out upon this scene with manifest concern. The psychologist's word for predicament on its subjective aspect is frustration. It comes from the balking of urges or the defeat of purposes in which a person has a large stake. It may be a single experience from which a person learns to absorb the shock of defeat and return to the attack. Or, it may be cumulative and eventuate in personal collapse. Instead of reorganizing his resources, he reacts by withdrawal until physical and mental health are undermined.

These observers also recognize that frustration has a collective aspect. There are times when society as a whole seems involved in a spiritual predicament. There is collapse of morale; there is mass fear, a disintegration of standards, and general descent to low levels of group action. Groups of people and even whole nations experience crushing disappointment of their hopes, failure of their purposes, and a loss of their faith. Such a condition exists throughout much of the Western world of today.

But the theological interpreter believes that we must go deeper in analyzing this predicament. Our aim must be more than the integration of individuals and their adjustment to human society and the outside world. God is the ultimate reality in man's environment and the kingdom of God is the order to which he must find adjustment. Man is a citizen of two worlds. As a part of the world of nature, man has a physical body. As a creature who transcends nature, he is a soul destined for eternal life. The inner divisions, of which the secular student is also conscious, root in human sin and the denial of the holy will of God. The primal contradiction in man goes back to his relation to God.

Seen in this light, man cannot effect his own deliverance but must depend upon resources beyond himself. This redemption does not eliminate all possibility of historical defeat, but

it does mitigate the tragic aspect. There is always hope of forgiveness beyond repentance, of a new beginning beyond judgment. No matter how far we are from God, he is not far from anyone of us. Though victory within the world is still denied, at least there is the possibility of victory over the world. Historical Christianity has never offered a superficially optimistic view of life, nor has it been content with any form of mere escapism. It has pointed a way of salvation to a humanity known to be in dire need.

## 6. The Relevance of Christian Education

In this situation, the responsibility of Christian education is very great. It begins with the earliest childhood, before persons become enmeshed in the conflicts and tensions of our culture. If much that is described in this statement is distant from the experience of many Christian youth, the reason is to be found in the success which Christian education has had in guiding them over the shoals and past the rocks of danger. With the help of all that can be learned from experimental methods, it has sought to guide growth into Christian channels. If the failures have been many, it is because of the tremendous difficulty of the task and our personal inadequacy. The successes which have come are only a summons to redoubled effort.

In Christian education man may be led to face his needs and problems realistically. That must be a preliminary to any solution or to the discovery of adequate resources. In Christian education the opportunity is offered to understand our religious heritage. The experience of the race must be ours if we are to live wisely, and in Christian education that heritage is of unique significance. The meaningful parts of this heritage must be taken over and applied to our problems. But education involves much more than the recovery of a past; it calls for constructive change toward a better future. A worthy Christian education sets as its goal the transformation of the human situation which places the man of today in his difficult predicament. We believe that progress is possible through an educational process which enlists individuals in the remaking of their own experience and in the reconstruction of the social relationships of which they are a part.

Whereas general education finds its norms in the life of the entire community, Christian education finds its norms in the convictions, ideals, and cult acts of the Christian community. Sometimes Protestantism has minimized this corporate aspect of religious experience, because of its individualistic emphasis. This has involved significant stress upon freedom of conscience and personal responsibility. But it has been to the neglect of social cohesiveness and historical continuity, and has fostered a negative attitude toward authority.

Christian education involves the induction of growing persons into the life of the Christian community. Just as effective citizenship requires an authentic guide in the moral judgments of the community, so the Christian finds guidance in the stream of corporate experience which the church seeks to embody. And just as secular education seeks to perpetuate the heritage of a common culture with its framework of values, so Christian education must seek to gain durability for the Christian way of life and for the concepts on which it rests. In a fellowship of faith the needs of men may be met as they are helped to find effective relation to society, to the world, and to the God who determines the conditions under which man works out his destiny. Thus, the individual may be led from plight and predicament toward power and peace.

## II. THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH AND PROBLEMS IN ITS TEACHING

The church is the society within which developing persons should grow up as Christians. It is also the body through which the heritage of the past is transmitted. If we conceive it broadly as the people of God, the Bible was written for the church and by the church. It is here that our faith has been formulated and passed on through a living succession of believing witnesses. The church has been the mother of us all, and there is truth in the historic statement, extra ecclesiam nulla salus.

Organizational unity is not now a mark of the Christian church, if it ever was the case. But the modern ecumenical movement has revealed a wide consensus on fundamental issues. The experience in summer schools and in seminaries which draw from all denominations witnesses eloquently to the existence of this consensus. Especially in the field of religious education have cooperative efforts been abundant and fruitful, testifying to the existence of a common ground of faith. On numerous occasions in recent years representative theologians of most of the major communions have united in significant studies. They have always found a wide base of unity among themselves.

Other interpreters of the religious scene are more conscious of the differences which separate sincere Christians. Often these are as marked within denominations as between different groups. Some of the latter are deeply rooted in conscientious conviction and present major obstacles to organic church union. But they do not thwart fellowship in the World Council of Churches, nor need they stand in the way of the effective work of the International Council of Religious Education, a body which does not interfere with the creeds of its cooperating bodies.

Part of the differences are due to differences of experience. The church must be inclusive enough to make room for both those who grow in the Christian life through progressive



Christian nurture and those whose Christian life finds initial stimulus in some cataclysmic experience. The church must welcome to her fellowship both those who have lived in hopeful surroundings and those who have seen chiefly tragedy and frustration. It must have a place for those who find it natural to depend upon external authority and for those who rely more strongly upon the powers of reason. It must include those of empirical temper and those who, in the broad sense, are mystics. No one theological system will satisfy all types of people, but all may recognize the partial character of their insights and reject sectarian isolationism because they know that they need correction.

A second reason for difference in theological opinion is that the Christian faith is itself so full of contrasts and paradoxes that it is impossible for any theological statement to do full justice to it. Important examples of these contrasting emphases are to be found in the relationship between divine sovereignty and human freedom, and between the divine righteousness and forgiveness. Hence, the church must always point beyond all systems of theology to the necessity of a personal relationship with God Himself, Creator, Judge, Redeemer. It is only in such personal experience of the divine-human encounter that the antinomies of Christian faith are in a measure resolved.

It is further to be remembered that differences of judgment inhere in the very genius of Protestantism. This movement constituted a protest against an exclusive institutionalism. It spoke in the name of the Word of God, whose Spirit can never be narrowly confined. A certain degree of differences is not to be deplored but is to be welcomed as a sign of vitality and life. Unquestioning uniformity is a mark of decay and death.

Nevertheless, we believe that there is a real unity within the Christian church, a unity which is most clear when we are faced by secular alternatives. Then, all Christians become aware of the differentia which mark their faith. Then they find themselves drawn together about the experiences which they have in common. Then they discover how strong is the tie that binds, and they learn once more that the hand may not say to the foot, "I have no need of you." All are members of the same body, the body of Christ.

All believe in the living God, the ground of our existence and the hope of our lives. He is known in moments of moral decision as the one who lays his hands upon us through the claim of the best we have ever known. He is the loving redeemer who seeks to draw men to himself and who forgives all who turn to him in repentance. Yet Christians interpret these convictions through metaphysical and theological systems which differ at many points.

All believe in Christ as the focal point of our historic faith. In the stream of history, of which he is the center, we

believe that God has been most clearly active for the saving of men. Yet in the speculative interpretations of the person of Christ and in theories of atonement, differences are certainly to be found among us. It is when affirmations are kept close to the experience of what God has done for us in Christ that our unity emerges.

All agree upon the basic elements of Christian ethics. Love is the great evidence of the Spirit of God. Humility is the only attitude which is worthy of a child of God. The whole of life is included in the range of duty of those whose goal is the kingdom of God. No legalism can ever be adequate for those who depend upon the forgiving grace of God. Yet when Christians face specific dilemmas in all fields of conduct, they frequently arrive at very different judgments. There is also no agreement on such questions as the degree to which Christian goals are realizable within history.

Lastly, we are all agreed that there is a people of God which transcends nation, state and race, a society to which the Christian owes his ultimate allegiance. Yet we have sincere differences about the organizational patterns which should be followed. Still we all can sing, "The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord."

If Christian education is to induct growing persons into the life of this fellowship, it must recognize that it is dealing with something more than our human quest for the good life. It is sharing in something that is divinely given. We must now turn to the understanding of these elements in our heritage. This will call for the analysis of five areas: (1) The Nature of Christian Revelation; (2) Revelation in Hebrew and Jewish History; (3) Christ and His Church; (4) Authority in Christian Development; (5) The Function of Creeds. After each section we shall consider some of the educational problems which are raised by these themes.

## 1. The Nature of Christian Revelation

(1) Christian faith affirms that God has revealed himself within history. A series of acts has taken place in which the redemptive will of God has been manifest. He has spoken through his prophets; his judgment is written in the course of human history; his Word became incarnate for men; and history finds its consummation in his kingdom. Christian experience arises as men respond to that redeeming revelation with trust and obedience. That includes receptive faith and committal to him, active love in the spirit of him who has loved us, and confident hope in the victory of his righteousness and truth.

Revelation is a word which is often used in a much wider sense than this. It is sometimes applied to the fact that God may

be known in a measure through the created world. This is fully recognized in the New Testament. When non-Jews are addressed in the Acts of the Apostles, it is assumed that there is a witness to God in nature (Acts 14:17). Paul says that the everlasting power and divinity of God are perceived through the things that are made (Romans 1:20); therefore, all men are without excuse when they worship the creatures of their own hands. The cosmological argument for the existence of God has been built on the fact that God may be known in part through the world of nature. On the other hand, it is just as true that the nature of God is not to be discovered from this alone.

Again, the word revelation has sometimes been applied to the noble insights which have come to men. There is the inspiration of the poet which can never be explained simply in terms of literary effort. The lines come to him in moments of high exaltation. In many religions there have been found various types of mystical experience. The soul of man within has felt that it has been made one with the soul of the universe without. Sometimes this has accompanied an elaborate spiritual discipline; sometimes it has come to the quiet spirit who sought only to be still in the Eternal Presence. The genuineness of these experiences can be denied by no one who has been taught from the Fourth Gospel that there is a light which enlightens every man. But private experiences must be subjected to social evaluation. Manifestations of the one God must have an inner consistency if they are to be accepted as true revelations.

It is significant that though the Bible recognizes the reality of these experiences, it does not employ the word "revelation" in connection with them. If we make that extension of vocabulary, it should be recognized that we are redefining our terms. We may, for instance, speak of "general revelation," which includes these concepts, and "special revelation," referring to the acts of redemption to which the Bible points. It would be presumptuous to claim exclusive validity for any one use of terms. But it is necessary to remove ambiguity and misunderstanding. In speaking of the divinely given revelation we are using the term in the Biblical sense.

The conviction that there has been a revelation of God in history does not exclude the possibility that there are aspects of the Infinite Mystery which are unknown and possibly unknowable. These present subjects for devout meditation and thoughtful speculation. Philosophical systems arise from this very proper speculative activity. Useful as they are to serve the apologetic needs of an age, they should always be looked upon as tentative and temporary. It is not any one of these human philosophies which is the starting point for faith but the historic events themselves, which Christian thought should seek to interpret. Our rational systems will always fail to comprehend completely the faith which arises amid a life that is larger than logic.



(2) If we really believe that there has been such a revelation of God in history, it has an important bearing on the content of Christian education. An adequate knowledge of the circumstances under which this took place ought to hold an important place in the curriculum. The Bible will be approached not simply as one of our valuable resources for present-day living. We shall also seek to learn how this divinely given revelation came to men. At the proper age, one of the needs of a growing Christian is an adequate understanding of the historical manifestation of God. A truly person-centered curriculum will not overlook this as a need of everyone who is to become part of the Christian fellowship. Obviously this type of study is not possible before the time when a child is ready for historical thinking. At all periods the study must be within the comprehension of the pupil. But no person can respond fully to God's revelation until he has had a chance to understand it.

If we recognize that there is also a general revelation of God, that too has an important bearing upon our curriculum materials. It is not enough to cite Biblical passages which speak about the manifestations of God in nature. There is no need to go back to an ancient literature for what God is saying today through the world about us. Once we take seriously the Biblical teaching that God is the Creator, the world which he has made becomes a fitting object of study for all who would know the supreme Artist. Those who insist that all lessons must be based on Biblical material should explain how they square this position with the teaching of the Bible itself. On the other hand, care must be taken to guard against any nature worship or confusion of God with his handiwork.

Again, if we really believe that God is to be found in individual inspiration and mystical experience, this provides a basis for including lessons that center about contemporary experience. We do not make this study Christian by adding a few verses of Scripture. It is Christian to the extent that it is experience of the God of historical revelation and not a message which contradicts his Word to men. He is active in the world movements of today as well as in the past. He judges sinful nations and exploiting classes now as well as in the days of Isaiah. As youth and adults face their life problems directly and think through these issues in the light of the gospel, divine guidance may be expected. Such study of contemporary life experiences has its justification in the beliefs that the living God continues to manifest himself to his children. His voice may be heard now in the experience of those who are attuned to it.

## 2. Revelation in Hebrew and Jewish History

(1) We begin our examination of the divinely given not with some philosophical world view but with ancient Hebrew and Jewish history. This may be approached objectively, like any other

portion of human history. The evolution of their religious ideas and the events of their political development may be traced as we follow the course of Babylonian or Egyptian history. Such a study shows the differences of Israel's religious experience from that of other peoples. But the value of that difference cannot be established simply by this kind of analysis. We must come to appreciate what these events meant to the Jews themselves: that their God Yahweh, whom they had at first conceived in quite primitive fashion, was in fact nothing less than the God of the universe. Here we are faced with the need for more than information which is critically sifted in accordance with historical method. We must make a decision of faith. Some dismiss the claim as a preposterous conceit; others recognize in various degrees that it does bring revelation of the eternal God.

The issue is inescapable because the whole Christian development roots in the Jewish faith recorded in the Old Testament. They found here a God who had come into covenant relation with his people. His judgment and mercy were seen in the events of their history. His character was proclaimed by prophets who did not hesitate to say, "Thus saith the Lord." These pages do not primarily offer a theistic explanation of the universe but present one who acts, who redeems, who brings judgment, and who in the end will send his salvation. The foundations of Christian faith are laid in the belief in one God of righteousness, the revelation of his will in Scripture and the messianic faith that his purpose must in the end prevail. Here is no distant being whom men must seek and feel after. Here is one who has acted on the plane of history.

Some find difficulty in the fact that the study of the Hebrew Scriptures shows evidence of their contact with other cultures and other religions. The archeological discoveries of the last century have illuminated the Old Testament at many points. They have made it clear that Israel's religion did not develop in "splendid isolation" but in living relationship with many cultures of the ancient world, especially the Canaanite, Babylonian, Egyptian, Persian, and Greek. The exact extent of these influences must be determined by the specialists in this field. Theology can never pre-judge such an issue. The genuineness of revelation is neither increased by minimizing these influences, nor is it destroyed by their full recognition. The God of the entire universe is not more truly revealed through the experience of a people if it is thought to be hermetically sealed from all outside spiritual influence. It is in the total result that we must find the revelation rather than in the absence of external human stimuli. But Judaism consciously set her face against outside influences at many stages in her development, because she was conscious of the difference of her heritage from the religions that surrounded her. That difference is as clear to the student of ancient religions as the truth of her living contacts with her spiritual environment.

Others find difficulty in the moral and spiritual limitations of some parts of the Old Testament. They forget that divine revelation is always and inevitably humanly received. "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son." (Hebrews 1:1, 2a. Revised Standard Version) No matter how absolute God may be, our knowledge of him shares in the relativities of human experience. The prophet who received the Word was not infallible, and the book that preserved the Word could not be inerrant, if for no other reason than that it had to be copied by human hands. But though this treasure was received in earthly vessels, the gold is not turned into baser metal by this fact. Consequently, Christian faith is not troubled when it finds different levels of spiritual experience in the Old Testament and lower ideas of God beside the higher. At best, this shows the need for a focus of revelation and a touchstone through which all may be judged.

(2) The large extent of Hebrew scripture presents the educator with the problem of selection. Because a story happens to be found in the Bible, it is not necessarily appropriate or effective for Christian education. Great wrong can be done by using primitive elements of the Old Testament before the student is ready for concepts of historical development. Many details will concern the historian which will have small place for the religious educator. Particularly within the Old Testament we must recognize various levels of material.

- (a) The primary level contains those great experiences and teachings which comprise the heart of the revelation of God in his righteousness and mercy, his judgment and salvation, his exalted majesty and his nearness to those who are lowly in spirit. No attempt will be made here to enumerate these, for there will naturally be differences of opinion about both extent and content. But this core of Old Testament material provides the real reason for studying Hebrew history and religion.
- (b) The secondary level adds the historical setting which will make these events and teachings intelligible, and which will help to show their real importance. Taken by itself, there may seem to be little religious value in knowing the sequence of the kings of Israel and Judah. This acquires its significance in relationship to the religious events which accompanied them. There is naturally difference of opinion on the amount of time which should be spent in Christian education upon materials which must be classified as belonging to this



level. Some believe that it is so important to know the setting of the revelation that nothing should be left out. Others believe that for any demonstrable results in the lives of the pupils this may wisely be dispensed with in favor of the use of more contemporary experience.

- (c) A tertiary level consists of those things which contribute vividness and interest to what is of central importance. A study of Biblical geography and the manners and customs of Bible times, particularly as illustrated by archeological discoveries, is what we have in mind. In themselves, these have no inherent value for Christian education any more than the geography of India and the customs of the Chinese. But they acquire importance as they serve to clothe with human interest the essential aspects of the revelation. A wise Christian education will not neglect these media. On the other hand, it will be on its guard against missing the primary goals through concentration upon things of minor religious importance.

There are those who doubt the wisdom of a systematic study of Hebrew history and religion, at least with children and youth. They point out that significant learning takes place only in a context of on-going experience. Apart from that, the study of the Bible will be unrewarding. On the other hand, most public school leaders would agree that there is no substitute in the education of an American child for a comprehensive study of American history.

There is, however, this difference between the two situations - an American child more readily sees the relevance of the disputes between the colonies and Great Britain than of the struggles between ancient Israel and Assyria. This fact may point to an important problem in Christian education; it is to establish in the minds of youth something of the sense of continuity with the people of God in the Bible that he feels with his own nation when he is studying its history. Once that analogy is accepted, it is difficult to deny the importance of tracing the main lines of Hebrew history, at least during adolescent years.

Undoubtedly, the church needs continued experiment in better ways of using the Bible. It is not enough for us to say that we should have more study of the Bible. The problem is how its real values may find their place in the lives of pupils, faced with such a bewildering variety of experiences. When we view the lamentable ignorance of the Bible in the churches of today, it is difficult to defend the adequacy of any of the current methods.

### 3. Christ and His Church

(1) The focus of Christian revelation is found in Jesus Christ. He is the embodiment of the gospel, the good news of the saving grace and power of God. In him God was reconciling the world to himself. God commended his love toward us in the death of his Son. Here was more than man's utmost devotion to the divine will. Here was the redemptive act of God himself through a human life in history.

The gospel was first of all a message which Jesus lived and preached. This was more than the good news of God's forgiveness. His own seeking love for the lost was an incarnation of this eternal aspect of the life of God. Jesus proclaimed nothing less than the coming of the kingdom of God for those who truly repented. In his own ministry, the powers of that rule were already at work, for he stood in a special relation to that kingdom. As "king of the Jews" he was nailed to a cross after his own people had handed him over to the Roman power.

The gospel was also a message which was preached about him. It began with the good news that God had raised him from the dead. Jesus was not only the Christ, God's Anointed; he was their living Lord. They had many ways of expressing what God had done for them in Christ. Sometimes it was in terms of a defeat of the demonic powers; sometimes it was through the analogy of a sacrifice; sometimes Christ was portrayed as the heavenly messenger who had brought life and light from the world above. Some interpretations of redemption were in terms of the original Jewish milieu. As the Christian community spread into the Hellenistic world, interpretations were more in relation to this background. But uniting them all was the conviction that in Christ God had done everything necessary for the salvation of men that lay within the sphere of his will and power. Christ was not simply one of many mediators between God and men but his ultimate Word for them.

Furthermore, the Christian faith involved a community which centered in Christ. It began with the group to whom Jesus promised entrance to the kingdom of God. After his resurrection it was the group who looked to him as Lord and upon whom he poured out God's Spirit. The holy name of the "ecclesia" or "church" was appropriated by them. The people of God were not a particular nation but those from every "tribe and nation and people and tongue" whose new life was constituted through Christ. Through the salvation which was given, the community was established which could appropriately be called "the body of Christ."

This community felt that it had uniquely received the Spirit of God. Belief in the Holy Spirit means that the God of revelation is a living God. Revelation can never belong exclusively to the past if the people of God have truly received his Spirit. The promise was that this would "guide them into all the

truth." This did not mean, however, the coming of a totally new and different revelation, for that would deny that Christ has a central place for faith. It meant rather that men would be guided into a fuller understanding of the significance of God's historic acts for men. This has taken place down the centuries. Though a special significance is attached by all Christians to the interpretations given in the New Testament, the latter developments cannot be left out of the continuing revelation of God.

(2) No one can say that contemporary Christian education means to neglect the person of Jesus. He is introduced in some way at all age levels of the curriculum. He is approached from many points of view. Nevertheless, this study leaves much to be desired. Too large a proportion of the time is devoted to the factors which we have described above as secondary and tertiary. Not enough is given to the primary aspects of revelation. It cannot be said that the Christian faith is being adequately shared.

- (a) In the first place, the career of Jesus in its main outline is quite imperfectly understood. There is a larger question than how we may use him as the example of conduct or the lessons we may learn from a particular saying. What was there about the course of his career which made him the central point in God's revelation to men? Seldom is such a project of study undertaken. Lessons may follow through an individual gospel and the student still be left without any clear conception of why this life should be more meaningful than all others.
- (b) In the second place, the faith of the church about Jesus has usually been inadequately studied. There is no part of the New Testament which does not present him as an object of faith. The apostolic message was the focus for all that the early Christians had to teach. They did not have a primarily biographical interest in Jesus; they wanted to proclaim the risen Lord who had brought God's salvation near. A religious education that leaves that in the background is inadequately Christian.

This faces us with the problem of the way in which the figure of Jesus shall be presented. Is the purpose of our study to inculcate the apostolic faith, or is the student to be encouraged to form his own judgment? Do we come with the answer or do we invite fresh exploration? Educators should realize more clearly the insight of New Testament scholarship of today, that there is no way to know the historic Jesus apart from the earliest evaluations.



It is hard to see how a Christian can teach the New Testament without desiring his pupils to share in those evaluations. But propaganda may easily be self-defeating. Faith is not genuine until it has been made our own. "Come and see" is the invitation which we read in the New Testament itself, and it should mark the spirit of our presentation of Jesus.

#### 4. Authority in Christian Development

(1) Major points of division among Christians are to be found in the extent of authority to be given to Christian history. Since the development of the church has taken place under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, some conclude that the church is nothing less than a continuation of the Incarnation. Undoubtedly, the attempts to clarify and re-state Christian faith brought new insights and developments. Through her great leaders, fresh stimuli come to enrich the life of the world. The God who raised up an Athanasius and an Augustine, a Francis of Assisi and a Bernard of Clairvaux, a Luther and a Loyola, a John Calvin and a John Wesley, was one who continued to speak to the generations of men. The extent to which this involved new revelations is largely a question of definition. It was not a new God who spoke through church councils and outstanding personalities, but these did introduce new acts of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This development involved the utilization of many new tributaries to the original gospel. The categories of Neo-Platonic philosophy, and later of Aristotelian, were employed to express the nature of God which was implied in the Christian faith. Ideas from Stoicism were utilized in the formulation on social ethics. Such procedures were necessary if contact was to be made with the thought world of those times. Some claim that the resulting formulations became an integral part of the revelation and are as authoritative as the Bible itself. Others hold that they are only witnesses to the faith and no more permanent than the thought world in which they were stated.

There is also difference of opinion regarding the place of thought forms of today. Some seem to feel that though it was legitimate for earlier generations to absorb tributaries for the interpretation of the gospel, Christian faith must stand in complete opposition to the intellectual world of today. Others, on the contrary, feel that it is as much the duty of the church to state her faith in terms of the issues of today as it was in any preceding century. The only necessity is that we state the Christian faith and not some other view even though it be phrased in Biblical terminology. For it is not the Christian faith if we deny that man, though a child of God, is a sinful, needy creature, or if we deny that God in his grace and power has met that need through Christ.

It should be recognized frankly that man's understanding of the implications of Christian faith has at times been corrected by movements arising from without the church. For instance, though we assume that Christianity and democracy are allies, for centuries the church was wedded to paternalistic and feudalistic ideals. That is still the case in some branches of Christendom. Democracy has found congenial points of contact with religious insights which have always been stressed. But these implications were not drawn until modern revolutionary movements stimulated their discovery.

Likewise, the Christian faith has at times been supplemented by various aspects of our intellectual progress. A noteworthy example lies in the growth of scientific control and in our understanding of the dependable processes of the world upon which it rests. The faithfulness of God takes on new meaning as experiment reveals our dependence upon reliable uniformities to which we can only adjust ourselves. "Thy will be done" becomes not a fatalistic submission to all that is, but a utilization of forces which we do not create for the attainment of a rational good.

Some would go further than this. While recognizing the centrality of the revelation of God through Christ, they believe that new religious insights have come in later history which may actually enrich the Christian faith. For example, they believe that new understanding has come out of psychology, particularly in what has been called mental hygiene, as to sin and salvation; that the social sciences, including the study of history, have furnished data out of which fresh interpretations of what is involved in Christian community have arisen; and that the physical sciences have furnished more accurate descriptions of the nature of the universe and of the world than were formerly available, thus giving new insights about the nature of God and his relation to his world with significant implications for prayer and worship. While recognizing continuity in the growth of Christianity, they believe that insights of this kind should be utilized as significant contributions to the development and enrichment of the Christian faith.

We would reaffirm the fact that the divinely "given" can never be reduced to an idea or to a group of propositions. Such slogans as the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man at best sum up important implications of the gospel. That gospel does not consist in a series of communicated truths but in the saving activity of God which has centered in Christ. The record of that phase holds a unique place as the word of God, but the record is not itself the Word. And without the illuminating presence of God's Spirit, its pages can never mediate the life of God. In the last analysis, it is that which is divinely given.

(2) Much contemporary religious education largely disregards the Christian development down the centuries. There has

been relatively little study of Christian history or of the outstanding personalities of the church. Even where this has been attempted, some have felt that its legitimacy could only be established by including some verses of Scripture in the lesson.

Many of us feel, however, that this practice indicates a very inadequate analysis of what is involved in Christian education. Such a point of view offers a very unbalanced curriculum. Post-Biblical characters may be just as inspiring for Christian living as many Biblical figures. The challenging life of the missionary, Adoniram Judson, for example, deserves to be studied along with the story of Joshua and other Old Testament characters. A narrow view of the place of the Bible in the curriculum should be superseded by a fuller understanding of the extent of divine revelation. The God of history did not die with the completion of the canon of Scripture.

Attention should also be called to the value, as an educational agent, of what can technically be called the Christian cultus. Churches differ widely in their acceptance or rejection of cult practices, liturgical usages, and symbols which once were traditional in Christian history. Protestantism, on the whole, has emphasized rejection. In many churches, however, this mood is changing today. The Christian year, for example, is again finding entrance into many educational programs, and liturgical movements of varying degrees of intensity are making themselves felt in most present-day church life.

Evaluations of these tendencies will, of course, be diverse. Churches which find such historic cult practices congenial claim for them great utility as agents of deepening church consciousness. Christian education itself, in such churches, relies less on merely intellectual disciplines or presentations of Christian truth in favor of the more subtle influence of participation in cult activities and familiarization with symbols.

In earlier sections emphasis has been laid upon utilizing contemporary experience. Here we need only add the fact that the continuing life of the church is the connection between our own experience and that of the people of God in Biblical times. It is no wonder that their experience seems remote and irrelevant when Christian education ignores the continuity in the development in the church. It is not enough to study the origin of our own denomination. It is not enough to study the Reformation as if there were a gap of centuries with no truly Christian faith. The faith of our fathers is living still because the light has never ceased to shine. Christian education should turn its spotlight on the great epochs and outstanding personalities if our own faith is to have deep roots.



## 5. The Function of Creeds

(1) The creeds of Christendom represent the attempt of the church to reduce her faith to systematic intellectual statement. As such, they are important indices concerning the nature of Christianity. Yet all of them are but partial expressions of Christian faith. They do not state all that is significant even to the Christians of a given period. They are rather affirmations on the issues that were in controversy at the time. Inevitably, creeds have been polemical documents. They have been drafted to exclude those who were thought to be in error, and to deny positions believed contrary to the Christian faith.

The earliest affirmations of faith were simple expressions of allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ. For a former Jew that meant belief that the crucified one, nevertheless, was God's anointed. For a former Gentile it meant the repudiation of the old gods and exclusive adherence to Christ. The first creeds served to renounce all that was involved in a pagan way of life and express loyalty to a different Lord. But very soon it appeared necessary to define more clearly who He was and what He had done for men.

During the first four centuries of the church's life, it was of primary necessity to define the relationship of Christ to God and in turn to the human race. This problem arose because the early Christian faith had interpreted Christ as a preexistent heavenly being. In this process, the intellectual concepts of that time were naturally employed. The issue was stated in terms of Greek metaphysics, but resolved in terms of fundamental religious faith. The Nicene Creed and the formula of Chalcedon were the agreements which became the foundations of orthodoxy.

These creeds of the "undivided church" will always remain as witnesses to the faith that redemption comes from no lesser source than God himself, and yet through one who was truly man. If some modern individuals feel dissatisfaction with these creeds, this does not mean any rejection of their religious intention. They may be as certain as the most orthodox that the positions which were rejected in these documents were repudiated under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is rather that they would state the problems in quite different terms. And many of the questions in which they today are vitally interested are ones upon which these creeds have little or nothing to say.

The Reformation brought the next great creed-making period. Those bodies of believers which felt compelled to break away from Rome in their rediscovery of the gospel were under the necessity of stating clearly the points of their difference. Whether it was the Augsburg or the Westminster Confession, or some other statement of Protestant conviction, the objective of

the declaration was to take a stand on the points retained and those repudiated. The fourth century issues were no longer in the foreground, but such questions as the appropriation of salvation and the meaning of the sacraments. In turn, the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent were drawn up to repudiate the Reformation positions and to consolidate in clear fashion the doctrinal developments of the preceding centuries. Again, we do not have all that is involved in Christian faith but the convictions of the respective groups on the major points in controversy. The relevance of these statements for today is determined by the degree to which we find those issues still the most crucial and vital ones.

In our own time, there have once more been occasions which seemed to demand a statement of Christian faith. One has been provided by the ecumenical movement which has sought to bring together the divided churches. When the Lausanne Conference (1927) passed on to the churches a statement on "The Message of the Church to the World," and again when the Edinburgh Conference (1937) adopted a statement on "The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," they were trying to single out the essential core of faith upon which Christians were agreed and which could provide a basis for true catholicity.

The other impetus to creed-making has come from the endeavor to Christianize the great pagan areas of our life. "The Social Ideals of the Church" was less a statement of faith than an enumeration of tasks that needed to be done in response to the Christian faith. More recently, representative groups of our leading American theologians have given formulations concerning the relation of the Christian faith to war, to the problem of a just and durable peace and the post-war settlement, and to the use of atomic energy. Here we find new and significant attempts to chart the meaning of Christian faith, not in relation to spiritual issues of the fourth or sixteenth century but to those of our own time. These pronouncements reveal the shallowness of any supposition that creeds are unimportant or antiquated. But no one would hold that any of them are either complete or final.

(2) What place is to be assigned to creeds and confessions in the process of religious education? There are those for whom a creed is a measuring-rod to which all must conform. For them, Christian education is indoctrination in a particular set of final conclusions. Belief is acceptance of the approved dogmas. Others look upon creeds as more like guide-posts. They are valuable expressions of faith in relation to particular issues which the church has been compelled to face through the centuries. Faith is trust in the living God with whom we must always face new issues. Fresh emphases are called for and the old affirmations must be integrated into the setting of life of each new day.

The question of creeds raises the issue of authority. It is not to be confused with authoritarianism, which connotes restraint and the ultimate assumption of responsibility by another. Authority in education, rightly conceived, is the weighting that is given by a free person to previous experience other than his own. To the extent that coercion is practiced, learning is stifled. But all education includes a setting of the stage, so to speak, in order that a desired character pattern will result. This is what democratic education undertakes to do in the secular school. It is the way in which the rearing of children takes place in a home that exalts personality. It is no less essential in the religious school.

Yet, authority in the matter of beliefs has been widely misconceived. It is doubtful if mere indoctrination is ever effectual over a long period. Rational conviction is in its nature voluntary. Moreover, Protestantism cannot consistently recognize the prescription of doctrines as indispensable to a Christian profession. A Protestant communion may limit its membership to persons who accept certain creedal propositions but it is not free thereby to assert that all who do not qualify are not Christians. The exclusiveness must be justified if at all on the ground that a more dynamic fellowship can be created by selection on the basis of belief.

Within such a body, religious education, to be effective, must present this doctrinal framework with such authentication as it has - namely, the weight of belief which supports it. On the other hand, a truly ecumenical religious education would not be exclusively denominational in its interpretation of Christianity. Nor would it assume that every child will remain in a given communion. While an improved educational program may be expected to hold larger numbers of children and youth within the denomination, one measure of its validity is the degree to which a person continues to feel at home if he moves to another denomination.

In brief, indoctrination, understood as doing another person's thinking for him, runs counter to Protestant tradition and to a valid conception of education. But since Christian education takes place within a corporate fellowship, the values and convictions that have been validated in corporate experience are heavily, deliberately weighted. They are part of a historically "given," like the convictions and values that give unity and permanence to family life. They do no violence to freedom, if individual judgment is stressed, because one of the central principles in the heritage that is being transmitted is the ultimate responsibility of a free spirit in response to God.

### III. PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATIONAL PROCEDURE

Christian education involves the effort of a community of Christians - a family, a church, or a group of churches - to



guide both young and adult persons toward an ever richer possession of the Christian heritage and a fuller participation in the Christian fellowship and the Christianization of society. In this final section we shall attempt to interpret the bearing of the modern study of persons on the methods and procedures of Christian education. Its central principle is growth. Hence, a sound theory of religious education must be developmental. Growth is not uniform for all persons, but it has its general norms as maturation proceeds. Extensive studies have yielded a body of significant facts about the process of growth which are quite as relevant to religious as to general education.

### 1. The Nature of Growth

We know that a young child has need of emotional support in love and tenderness. In experiences designed to meet this need, the groundwork of the familial ethic of Christianity is laid. We know that a child develops very early a sense of obligation, the content of which is determined largely by family life. A desire for harmony and a sensitiveness to disharmony are of the essence of childhood experience. A regretful recognition of having disturbed that harmony is as normal for children as is the sense of guilt for an adult who has knowingly violated a moral principle which he accepts. In the child's unhappiness over a recognized fault and in his eagerness for reconciliation, the whole drama of sin and forgiveness is enacted. It needs no theologizing at that level and it will not be clarified by an adult vocabulary. But what we have called the element of "predicament" is present and unmistakable. The resolution, as on the adult level, is found in redemptive love, and the experience of this love is the matrix into which adult interpretation of sin and restoration will one day be poured.

We know also that growth occurs both by imperceptible changes and through "red-letter" experiences, in which new insights are gained and new adjustments made. There could be no greater mistake than to suppose that a developmental view of growth excludes this type of sudden critical experience from which a new base-line must be drawn. Indeed, significant learnings are likely to be of this sort. Much is made in current educational theory of the problematic situation, the disturbed equilibrium, which compels a fresh adjustment. Psychologically, this corresponds in some sense to the "predicament" of which theologians speak, though it rarely assumes grave proportions. Significant decisions are taken in that kind of situation, where a momentous choice must be made, where a "forced option" is confronted. Critical encounters of this sort are altogether normal and it is the business of education so to order experience that they will be negotiable - not crushing or frustrating "crises," but contributory to growth.

This brings us to the matter of conversion. In Protestant teaching it has played a conspicuous part. The difficulty is that the conversion experience was standardized on the adult-sinner level. It presupposes, as ordinarily conceived, a grave crisis in which a sense of desperation is approximated. The person has a now-or-never feeling about the imperative to decide. Yet the whole concept of Christian nurture which is implicit in child baptism or child dedication and to which Christian parent education is directed runs counter to the assumption that such an experience is to be expected in a wholesomely reared child.

Even in an adult, a religious conversion occurs in a context of cumulative experience, and its content is determined by that context. The strain that is built up by deliberate wrongdoing, the prolonged denial of religious promptings, the tragedy of deep involvement in sin - these are elements of an adult experience in which religious education has failed or been absent.

There is abundant evidence that a well nurtured child, growing up in a Christian home, may attain a rich religious experience without undergoing any such major crisis. Indeed, these crises experiences seem to have become rare in the Christian community. We have not faced the implications of gradual changes in what may be called the pattern of Protestant religious experience. The more successful religious education is in promoting normal spiritual growth, the greater the likelihood that conscious commitment to Christ will come about not cataclysmically, but through cumulative religious experiences which culminate in a definite dedication. The climactic is not to be identified with the cataclysmic, but we should never obscure the need for definite commitment. Growth cannot begin until at least a start has been made.

Recognition of these facts does no violence to what we have called the distinctive elements of the Christian faith. On innumerable occasions, the child experiences, on his own level, critical encounter with God, the impact of moral imperatives, a sense of guilt, and a need for reconciliation. A religious education that does not equip him to meet these situations, to fit them into a pattern of continuous growth, and to emerge from them a better person is less than Christian.

Psychologists are stressing the significance for the whole of life of early childhood experiences of a critical sort. Fortunately, there is less stress now on the "early trauma," the forgotten psychic injury in infancy, the assumption of which gave a rather fatalistic turn to child psychology. But there can be little doubt that the early years are a time of crucial importance, studded with significant events to which the Christian analysis of human experience is highly relevant. Redemptive love is the key principle. The parent is the primary bearer of it, with the teacher playing a similar role.

The assumption that there are sharply demarcated stages of development in childhood and youth has been discarded. The theory of recapitulation in the life history of the individual of the stages of human development has few, if any, supporters. The assumption that certain concepts become relevant only at certain ages rests also on an unsure foundation. A discerning parent discovers very early adumbrations of ideas and moods that wait long for full articulation, but which require a vocabulary at the child's level. Sometimes moral judgments come out with the more striking clarity because they are not overlaid with adult sophistication. It is especially important that genuine experience should not be minimized or explained away because the child is assumed to be too young to admit of their being valid. Much confusion has arisen over the identification of the sense of guilt as a morbid experience. That it may be such and has often been induced as such is all too true. But it is impossible to hold the meaningfulness of a clear conscience while denying the reality of a guilty one. Moral approval is one of the earliest employed educational techniques. To exclude its negative counterpart is to be naive about a child. The all-important matter is the level of the developing experience to which these concepts should be related.

Nothing is better established than the centrality of purposeful activity in the healthy growth of persons. The purposes must be those of the learner. This does not mean that privately developed purposes are normative or that the individual is to be encouraged merely to "express himself." Education has to do with the selection of purposes and their effectual pursuit. A successful education brings guidance to bear upon the individual so that valid purposes, so judged by the community, will be autonomously built into his life. And since the human organism is the most versatile of creatures, there is an indefinite range of purposes which is potentially meaningful. It follows that without coercion or repression, with full respect for personal freedom, the educator is able to facilitate and encourage those choices that result in a higher level of life. The expression of purposes in activity is an educational necessity. Indeed, it means nothing to "have" a purpose that is not being made explicit in action. Purposes do not endure in storage. And since Christianity is an ethical religion, Christian action is profoundly social. The purposeful activity through which Christian education achieves its ends is socially guided. Its purposes are validated, not merely in the context of ordinary community experience but in that of the Christian community. It is a prime responsibility of the church to create and maintain opportunities for purposeful social action in accord with the norms established by the corporate Christian conscience. The possibilities here are infinitely varied. There is no excuse for projects improvised as busy work, whose lack of significance children and youth are quick to discern. In large measure Christian education is to be judged by the range and richness of activity which it provides.



## 2. The Place of Freedom

Within the framework of moral and spiritual values found in the Christian heritage, individual initiative and voluntary participation develop naturally as in well organized family life. Freedom is of its essence since spiritual freedom is a function of personality, social in nature and development. To encourage initiative and responsible participation, while at the same time maintaining an environmental setting that is conducive to growth in a Christian pattern, is our task. It involves difficulty, but no contradiction. The "good" life is realized only as an experience in social living, with continuous orientation toward the community and its core of values. The safeguard against repression of the individual person, who is the ultimate focus of all obligation, is in the fidelity of the community to its own essential nature. In Christian education this community is the ecumenical church. Empirically it can, and often does, fail to be the church. It may stifle rather than foster genuine religious liberty. Institutionally, it stands continually in need of correction. Such correction is accomplished through the vision and energy of free spirits. But if they cannot operate within the framework of the historic Christian tradition, then our faith is vain.

## 3. Christian Education and Social Relationships

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that our aim is one that requires the progressive Christianization of the common life. This consideration is especially relevant to adult education in the church. In a secular age, the boundary between the Christian community and the total community is always blurred. The fellowship of the church should furnish the dynamic for making an effective impact upon secular society, in which the Christian vocation must be practiced. Here we continually encounter an anomalous situation. Historically, the emphasis in Protestant religious education has been individualistic and little attention has been given to Christian vocation as practiced in a secular social order. Hence, we find professed Christians - for example, lawyers, bankers, teachers, legislators, labor leaders - accepting the norms of the secular community with more or less complacency. An adequate Christian educational program should include study by vocational groups of the implications of the Christian testimony for their specific tasks.

Another feature of a Christian education program which is indispensable at the higher age levels is the study of ways in which the Christian ethic can be brought to bear upon the political, social and economic structure of society. This objective cuts across all vocational groups, affecting Christians as citizens, as consumers, as investors of money, and as members of informal social groups.

In giving religious education this social outreach, the churches must recognize that they are encouraging their members, singly and in groups, to push back the frontiers of Christian consensus, to go beyond the existing sanctions, to do in the name of the gospel what they cannot do in the name of their church. It is through the efforts of such persons and groups that the Christian consensus is widened and new sanctions are built up. The church impels its members to seek to know and do the will of God beyond the present boundaries of the common will of the Christian community. Thus, the church is able to transcend its limitations. In the long run, the corporate Christian conscience, the mind of the church, guided by the Spirit of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, will validate what is true and eliminate what is false. This is our faith.

#### 4. The Fellowship of the Church

It follows that all Christian education rests back on the life of the church as a corporate fellowship. No program of Christian education can rise far above the level of the church life within which it is set. For the warm, pulsating life of the Christian community is itself perhaps the most potent educator. The quality of its communal life, the way it administers its own affairs, the extent of its Christian sympathy and outreach within its own locality and to the ends of the earth - in short, the degree to which it expresses the Gospel within its corporate life - these mould the lives and characters of individuals far more than formal teaching.

The church will never be stronger in any of its aspects than it is as a center of worship. Unquestionably, worship is a function that is widely diffused, integrating itself with every activity that a Christian undertakes. But formal worship is of prime importance and liturgical education is indispensable. The symbols of worship have a potency that transcends intellectual formulations, and nothing can take the place of corporate repentance, aspiration and praise. And, as is true of all other learnings, we learn to worship by worshiping.

# THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## III

### THE LOCAL CHURCH PROGRAM

Prepared by

THE COMMITTEE ON THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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## PREFACE

This document is one of eight reports issued by the Committee on the Study of Christian Education to the International Council of Religious Education. The committee was established by Council action at the Annual Meeting in February, 1944, with Dr. Paul H. Vieth of the Yale University Divinity School as chairman, Dr. Nevin C. Harner, now President of Heidelberg College, as vice-chairman, and Dr. Gerald E. Knoff of the International Council staff as executive secretary.

The committee interpreted its task as that of presenting its final reports as independent findings, addressed to the Council rather than as reports which necessarily had to have Council approval. The Council found itself in complete agreement with this understanding and took specific action to that effect at the Annual Meeting of 1945.

Some of these reports were presented to the Council at the February 1946 Annual Meeting; others were presented in 1947. All of the documents have been presented to the International Council though they are not to be interpreted necessarily as the findings of the Council.

Some of the recommendations have been formally adopted by Council action; others have been received for study and later action, as will be shown in the minutes of the International Council for the Annual Meetings of 1946 and 1947.

The substance of the eight reports together with other interpretive material has been incorporated in more popular form in the book, The Church and Christian Education, by Paul H. Vieth, published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis, for the Cooperative Publishing Association. The price is \$2.50. This book is suitable for use by lay people, by volunteer church workers, and for classroom work, as well as by professional groups.

The titles in this series of Study Committee documents are as follows:

I	Christian Education, Yesterday and Today . . . . .	.25
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## THE LOCAL CHURCH PROGRAM

### I. THE CHURCH AS A LEARNING-TEACHING FELLOWSHIP

The communication of the Christian faith is a joint responsibility of the home and the church. The place of the home in this undertaking will be fully considered in a later section of this report. This section will deal with the task of the local church, touching the home only at points where desirable relations between the home and the church should be considered.

Vast organizations representing millions of adherents, assemblies, boards and committees may be more impressive than any local church. They will give strength and guidance to the local units. But only as the local congregations grow in numbers, improve in quality of life, and increase in their effectiveness in teaching the Christian faith will the aims of Christian education be realized.

The church communicates the Christian faith by its spirit and life, and by its more direct efforts at teaching. Its entire life, as it seeks to come to the full realization of the fellowship of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and by its work to do his will, is a transforming influence upon its adherents. In addition to this, it seeks to make explicit and interpret the Christian faith by activities appropriate to a school, with classes, teachers, curriculum materials, times and places for teaching, and other activities of a learning and character-developing nature. These two endeavors together constitute the teaching work of the church. To do this second without the spirit and life flowing out of the first would be futile; to depend on the first only would be to deny the place and importance of special educational effort in human learning.

The very word church implies a local group of persons, living in a fellowship possessing distinctive characteristics. In common with all other social groups it exists in time and space. All such groups exert an influence on their members which tends to cause them to accept and share the group's highest ideals and loyalties. But the church is distinguished from all other social groups in its conviction of its divine origin, its existence in both time and eternity, and its sense of unity with all other similar groups because of a common loyalty to Jesus Christ - the body of Jesus Christ in a temporal world: "One Lord - One Body - One Spirit."

In New Testament times, the condition for entrance into the fellowship was a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and personal loyalty in discipleship to him as living Lord. This meant a life lived within the group, and essentially a life of community in which each person felt himself to hold a trust for all the fellow members and for all the world. It was a bond stronger than the natural ties of sex, family, culture, race, tribe or nation.

So today, membership in the fellowship should involve commitment to a faith and a way of life which is characteristic of the fellowship. More than that, it should mean discipleship to a living Lord, with an earnest effort to learn from him as well as from each other. Entrance into and life within such a group is basic in all Christian education.

The church is not just a house of worship. It is more than an assembly for worship, although the common worship of God is its most characteristic act. The church is its people, in their lives in homes, in their social contacts, in their work and in their play. Wherever the life of the fellowship impinges upon and transforms the life of every day, there is the church. It is the quality of its life in all these phases that most powerfully teaches children, young people and adults, both within and without the fellowship.

In this fact lies the significance of the Christian home. For the Christian home is in a very real sense "the church in thy house." In the daily, intimate contacts of the home, the Christian fellowship has its greatest opportunities and responsibilities. Every member of the family, young and old, shares the responsibility for making this fellowship a genuine church of Christ, and through it receives the spirit of Christ flowing into its members by the grace of God.

The church group itself is such a body that from its spirit, life and work there is an influence which flows into its members for their Christian growth. Its effort to achieve a life with God through worship, its loyalty to Christ as Lord and its spirit of humble discipleship, its high ideals of personal integrity and a life of service, its sense of sharing God's work in the world as it seeks to do his will - these are the food for the soul of which the members of the fellowship daily partake for this growth in life with God.

This Christian community opens its life to its more immature members and shares with them the ideals, beliefs, and activities which dominate the fellowship. This process of sharing the faith is the church's most effective way of communication. It requires forethought so that the results may not be simply accidental, but designed. It requires a plan whereby the immature are enabled to grow into more and more mature participation.

Such sharing comes best through a sense of belonging and responsibility. From his earliest contacts with the church and as fully as he is able the child should have a sense of his own belonging to the fellowship. To him his membership in the children's groups is, in a very real sense, membership in the church. And so it should be, for every group maintained by the church for worship, study or fellowship is a manifestation of that church in space and time. From such beginnings growth toward full fellowship may progress in an orderly way.

The path from the simple contacts with the church in childhood to the fuller sharing of the fellowship in maturity should be clearly marked and the journey carefully planned. "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child..." There is a place in the church for the child - the largest place which he in his immaturity can

occupy. But when he grows older, he must put away childish things. This process of growing up in the fellowship must be accompanied by instruction in the meaning, message and mission of the church. Such instruction may be intensified in a special period of preparation for fuller membership known as the pastor's class or the church membership class. But the total task of inducting the member into the fulness of knowledge concerning its faith and life is so great that it must be a continuing process, beginning long before the "membership class" and continuing throughout life as growing maturity brings new abilities to understand and share creatively in the church's work.

But instruction is only an interpretation of experience. A real sense of membership in the fellowship of the church can come only from acceptance into its life. Thus the status of the child should be definite and recognized. He is not only in the church but of the church - not yet a full member, but nevertheless recognized as having a definite status in the body of Christ. About the time of early adolescence he is prepared to take a forward step - to accept for himself the vows of loyalty to Christ and membership in his Body. But this is not the end of the process. Continual growth should work more and more mature participation in the Christian fellowship. Progress along the road to mature membership should be marked by celebration in the church of each successive stage as it is reached, by the assumption of greater responsibility for the work of the church, and by continuing study to keep pace in understanding with the advancement in participation.

The most characteristic act of the church is the worship of God. God himself has created in man the capacity to answer the impact of His Holy Spirit on man with an attitude of humility, gratitude, reverence - in short, worship. There is no activity of the church which can so readily include the participation of all ages as public worship, nor any which will give the entire church family so much a sense of oneness. Moreover, in the hymns, the prayers, the responses, the Scriptures, and the discourse, all performed in an atmosphere of reverence, there is a revelation of the character of God as well as the means of communion with Him. While it may be true that there are many things in a general service of public worship that the younger members of the fellowship do not understand, it is also true that this service of worship provides an experience which familiarizes them with words and practices which are learned through the very act of participation. Thus worship, engaged in because it is the highest realization by the Christian community of its spirit and Object, is at the same time its most powerful influence in the establishment of the religious attitude. There is need for graded departmental worship, but it cannot replace the general public worship of God for young and old as the most important act of the church family. The sermon itself is a means of Christian education; in practice it is one of the chief means for many people.

Worship is a natural impulse, but its forms and expressions are learned. The teaching program must assume as a major responsibility the teaching of young and old in the meaning and forms of worship. Here again we see that Christian education involves practice in the act and instruction in the meaning of that act as inextricably interwoven,



The work of a church is performed through officers, committees, service groups, and individual acts of members. Such service in the work of the church is an important avenue to understanding the meaning and purpose of the church as it seeks to communicate and express its Christian faith. Training for such specific acts of service is an important and effective phase of religious education for its members. In the performance of these acts, officers and committee members are helping others more fully to understand the meaning of Christian life and work.

We have maintained that the spirit and life of the church are basic in its endeavor to give Christian education. These things are not to be set parallel with Christian education in a church program. They are Christian education at its best. A comparison might be drawn with community life. It is the life of any community in its homes and stores, on its streets, and on its playgrounds, which gives education to every child. The community, however, maintains a school because there are many things to be learned which general community life does not teach. They include the common tools of communication, such as reading and writing, guidance in the practical and moral problems involved in human relationships, exploration and interpretation of the life in the community, extension of experience beyond the community into world-wide relations. Just as the community needs the school for these purposes, so the church needs to supplement the experience which comes through opening and sharing its life with its more immature members by a program of instruction, interpretation and guidance. This specifically is the teaching task of the church.

The teaching program of the church requires that some of the more mature members share their fuller understanding of and commitment to the Christian faith with those who are less mature. It calls for classes, discussion groups, opportunities to practice Christian living. It utilizes books, lesson materials, pictures, maps, and equipment of all sorts. It employs classrooms, time schedules, and organizational arrangements. All these teaching activities taken together constitute the church school. They are never parallel with the church in the sense of constituting an alternative of either the one or the other. They are the church in action - in an essential activity for the well being of its life as it was described above. These teaching-learning activities are for young and old, for all must undergo the discipline which alone will yield growth in knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and skill in living the Christian life.

## II. AGENCIES AND PATTERNS

The combined educational activities of a church may be comprehended under the general term church school. Through the church school the church seeks to meet the educational needs of all its constituency, young and old alike. While traditionally the educational work of the church has expressed itself through certain agencies and patterns, the important thing is not the maintenance of any given agencies, but the meeting of the educational needs of the congregation. This will often require new and better patterns of work. Whatever plan of organization may be worked out for any particular local church, it is important to

maintain the point of view that it is the agency of the church, the church in action, and that it does not have any place or status apart from this.

There are many agencies which contribute to Christian education in the local church, which together constitute the church school. This report will first make a critical evaluation of some of the better known of these agencies which have developed in the church. It will then consider the principles of organization and plans of procedure through which the teaching aspects of the church's work will most surely be accomplished and the contributions of the agencies best be realized.

It would be appropriate to include the Christian home among these agencies. This will not be done here because a separate section of this report deals with the Christian home. The new emphasis on the place of the Christian home in Christian education raises acutely however the question of the inter-relation of the home and the church in Christian education. We believe that even if the home should reach the highest efficiency as a teacher of religion, there would still be no lessening of need for the local church to utilize to the full its other agencies for Christian nurture, for the following reasons:

- (1) The church is the mediator of the Christian faith to the home, and must guide the home in the performance of its work of Christian nurture;
- (2) There are homes represented in the church which are not Christian, or which are otherwise incapable of giving Christian nurture;
- (3) The task of Christian teaching is great enough to require the whole-hearted effort of both church and home;
- (4) However effective home teaching may be, its members, young and old, need the fellowship and the training that comes from learning the Christian way of life in a larger social group. It is not "the home or the church" as primary teacher, but "the home and church" as partners in the task.

### 1. The Sunday Church School

Traditionally this is the agency of Christian education. Others may be recognized as having value but the Sunday school has been regarded as in a class by itself. "The religious education program" and "the Sunday school program" have often been regarded as synonymous expressions. To discover evidence of the truth of this statement one has only to turn to many a church with its committee on religious education and note that it is expected to concern itself with the Sunday school, and with nothing else. Of course, this situation should not prevail.

Much is being said in these days about the Sunday school as a gradually vanishing institution. From the standpoint of numbers, what are the facts? In an earlier section of this report we have observed a loss in Sunday school enrollment (excluding Buddhists, Jews, and Roman Catholics) from 21,693,005 in 1943 to 21,461,423 in 1945, a loss of approximately 231,500.

But what of statistics before this two year interval? The actual statistics of the various denominations from the beginning of this century show the Sunday school membership curve going up for the earlier part of the period and going down for the latter part. To be more specific, the three decades from 1906 reveal this to be true: (1) an increase during the first decade of about 35%; (2) an almost stationary situation during the second decade (but with a slight increase of about 5%); (3) a loss during the third decade of about 12%, during which time the losses in rural areas were more than four times as great as in urban areas.\* Again, a study of the major Protestant denominations from 1934 to 1943 indicate that 20 denominations had a Sunday school enrollment of 18,167,912 in 1934 and of 16,520,920 in 1943. Their membership drop was therefore about 9% for this nine-year period.\*\* During this nine-year period the total population increased about  $9\frac{1}{2}\%$ ; but the real question has to do with population changes for those of Sunday school age. If - and this would be an ideal situation - the church's school included all ages in fair proportion there would be real cause for concern over a 9% loss in Sunday school enrollment during a period when there was a  $9\frac{1}{2}\%$  increase in population. But as long as we are content to let the Sunday church school remain chiefly a children's organization we need to go deeper into the figures. During the time that Sunday school enrollment figures were dropping, what was happening to the percentage of children and young people of our total population?

The Census Bureau of the United States has given population figures for different age-groups for twenty-year periods together with estimates for the future.\*\*\*

These indicate that

- (1) Ages 0-4 show a steady decrease - 12.1% of the population in 1900; 10.9% in 1920; 8% in 1940; 6.7% estimated for 1960.
- (2) Ages 5-19 also show a steady decrease - 32.2% of the population in 1900; 29.7% in 1920; 26.4% in 1940; 22.3% estimated for 1960.
- (3) Ages 20-44 is almost stationary, - 37.7% of the population in 1900; 38.4% in 1920; 38.9% in 1940; 37.5% estimated for 1960.
- (4) Ages 45 and over show a steady increase, - 17.7% of the population in 1900; 20.8% in 1920; 26.7% in 1940; 33.5% estimated for 1960.

With the constant decline in the percentage of the population at the lower-age-levels and the constant increase at the upper age-levels we need not be surprised at a numerical decrease in an institution that the church persists in regarding as chiefly for children, or for children and youth.

\* See A General Sunday School Survey, January, 1945, by the Committee on Sunday School Survey of the St. Charles Avenue, Presbyterian Church, New Orleans, La. Table 1.

\*\* op. cit. Table 7.

\*\*\* op. cit. Table 12.



This, however, is not merely a matter of "percentage of population." The actual child population of the nation has been decreasing so that cities have reduced the number of school buildings being operated and states have been amazed at the downward curve. In Massachusetts, for example, the public schools enrolled 22,486 fewer pupils in 1944 than in 1943, - a drop of 3.8%, this drop appearing in elementary, junior-high, and high schools. In the same state during the decade ending in 1943, the number of children in the age-range from 5 to 7 showed a decrease of 20%; the number in the age-range from 7 to 16 showed a decrease of 17.3%; the total number of pupils enrolled in the public schools decreased 19.1%; and the total number of elementary school children decreased 25%. But through this period the total population of the state increased by 1.6%. Many other states would reveal similar situations. Thus it happens that the church has had more people to reach, but the Sunday school (if it is regarded as primarily for children) has had a considerably smaller number from whom to draw.

The war has had its effect on the Sunday school, as upon everything else; and other factors too have entered into the problem.\* But actual population statistics have been given insufficient attention and these must be borne in mind by those who keep reminding us that a drop in numbers is a sure sign of defeat.

In spite of all that has been said, however, the Sunday church school is not beginning to measure up to its opportunities in the matter of numbers. The vast number of the unreached is a constant challenge to go forward numerically.

A few religious journals and some individuals periodically attack the work of the Sunday school. In many instances our committee believes that these criticisms are justified. We recognize, for example, that if a school in practice teaches irreverence or fails to teach the Bible it has, to that extent, become a liability and not an asset. The fact is that all too many Sunday schools operate with such poor planning, such untrained leadership, and such haphazard methods that the net result is little good and much harm. On the other hand, our committee utterly repudiates the implication that such inadequacies are inherent weaknesses of the Sunday school. They are rather the result of lack of planning, slovenly performance of accepted duties, and disinterest on the part of ministers as well as laymen in this fundamental phase of the church's work. There are so many schools operating on an entirely different basis and in goodly measure realizing their Christian objectives that we take courage. We know that the Sunday schools can be effective because, in so many instances, it is.

Therefore, of those who find satisfaction in attacking the Sunday school we respectfully ask four questions:

- (1) Have they tackled the Sunday school problem themselves, attempting to improve it from within, or have they stood on the sidelines as inactive spectators?
- (2) If the Sunday schools seem inadequate have they a substitute plan to propose?
- (3) If all Sunday schools were to be discarded next Sunday would there be an increase in church attendance?

\*See pp. 12-13, A General Sunday School Survey, January, 1945, Committee on S.S. Survey of the St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church, New Orleans, La.

- (4) Do they apply as severe tests to other areas of religious work as they are applying to the Sunday school? They are concerned that it does not result in greater Bible knowledge, more Christian attitudes, deeper reverence, more consistent Christian lives; and it is well that they should feel such concern. If they are ministers conducting services of worship have they applied as severe tests there? Because men and women are silent and assume the attitude of reverence can we be sure that our objectives are being realized? What assurance is there that adult worshipers on a Sunday morning are thereby learning to live the Christian life, growing in religious attitudes, developing in knowledge and in faith? If there is danger that we assume too much in the case of adults, there may be danger that we assume too little in the case of children.

A divinity school student recently surveyed and analyzed those critical articles on religious education which have appeared in recent years in two of our best known and most influential religious periodicals. Some of these articles dealt directly with the Sunday church school. Others dealt with it by indirection and by implication. The summary of the paper is included at this point.

In conclusion we may say that all of the writers agree, in varying degrees, that the condition of contemporary church school education is not a very happy one, and that there is a crying need for the combined efforts of ministers, religious educators and laymen to rescue it from its sad state. However, they do not agree as to exactly what is the matter or what should be done. The number of criticisms which they have made may be classified as dealing either with the relation of theology to method, or with the inadequacies of the administration and organization of the average church school.

The criticisms of the first group fall into three subdivisions: (1) furthering educational ideologies at the expense of theological content; (2) not being able to bring theological beliefs down to meet the everyday life-situations of the people; and (3) deficiency on the part of both the theological content and the educational method of Christian education.

The second group of criticisms has five subdivisions: criticisms of (1) the spiritual and educational qualities of the Sunday school teacher; (2) the small amount of time given to the Christian educational program; (3) the independence of the church school from the total church program; (4) the lack of home support and (5) the absence of a cooperative Protestant Christian educational program.\*

In judging the work of the Sunday church school figures must not loom too large. It is the immeasurables that count for most, - the attitudes, the habits, the Christian motives, - as well as growth in Bible

\* MacGregor, Wanda, Religious Education in Recent Religious Journals, an unpublished article.

knowledge and the development of a Christian philosophy and a Christian faith. It is growth in Christian character much more than the things that are easy to measure. This is one reason why many of us oppose the use of devices and awards for perfect attendance; they lift up mere attendance as of chief importance, when in reality we have objectives that are much more significant. The test of failure or success must be lifted above the area of numbers.

The historic contribution of the Sunday church school should not be minimized. It has given most people their first touch with the church. Most of us can look back to at least one teacher whose good influence has been indelible. Such Bible knowledge as the majority possess goes back to Sunday school days. There we learned to worship and to lead in worship. We remember service projects that caught our interest and promoted the spirit of brotherhood. Though it has failed at many points millions owe to it the chief credit for what growth they have made in Christian living. And its workers have furnished as fine examples as can be found of faithful service in the church. But the Sunday Church school has definite limitations. It is only one part of the Church school and should not be expected to perform the functions that rightly belong to other agencies.

What are the future possibilities of the Sunday school? And at what points do we need to exercise special care?

- (1) We need to work against the independency of the school and recognize that it is simply the church at work in its teaching task for certain of its constituency. (If we say that it is for the entire constituency, then in some churches we shall have to revamp our plans and act as if it were designed for men and women, too.) There must be Christian teaching; without it Christianity is doomed. Worship is essential; and fellowship and service are important; but they are not enough; there must be teaching. If the present Sunday school does not do its teaching work well, we shall have to substitute another teaching agency; and this is simply continuing and improving and renaming what we have.
- (2) We must do some new thinking in the matter of statistics. This matter of numbers is not an independent problem, unrelated to other important factors. Ample illustrations are available to prove that attendance is dependent primarily on the quality of the work done. Leaders must be discouraged from attacking the problem of numbers by itself, from using cheap or unsound devices to build attendance, and from judging their numbers without relation to population trends.
- (3) We need a new emphasis upon the needs of persons rather than upon the promotion of organizations. This may mean an entirely new strategy for many of us.
- (4) We must be constant in stressing an improved leadership in which we think of the quality of the leader, the faith on which his life is built, his motivation and life purpose, improvement in methods, leadership experience.



- (5) More careful thought must be given to what the church school is attempting to achieve, so that both the church and its workers may keep before them significant objectives, and check their success on the basis of these deeper achievements in the lives of persons, rather than by the outward and superficial tests at which we grasp merely because they are easier to measure.
- (6) The experimental mood must be encouraged. There are many who are interested in new programs -- e.g., the Junior Church -- and who think that in adopting these new patterns they are turning their backs upon the traditional Sunday school. They may be turning their backs upon traditional procedures, but they are still trying to achieve the goals they have had and attempting to do the job in a better way. They are still within the framework of the Sunday church school as we conceive it. For our committee does not regard the Sunday school as a pattern evolved during the last century which must be maintained under that name and in an old form. In it there is room for constant change and improvement.

Many questions and problems emerge which call for careful thought and experimentation. A few of these are listed:

- (1) Is there such a thing as a "Sunday psychology" that operates against the effectiveness of the Sunday school as a teaching agency? This is a good subject of study for the International Council. If the week-end let-down from study is inevitable some revamping of the program becomes necessary.
- (2) Can the Sunday church school be effective with volunteer leaders or is it necessary to pay part-time workers for Sunday teaching? Even though the best thought is divided on the subject we can agree that an unwillingness to pay for teaching should not grow out of a church's unwillingness to provide an adequate budget for Christian education.
- (3) Do the teaching materials support the basic objectives of the church? Does the church know its own objectives sufficiently to judge teaching materials? The local church, - its ministers its officers, its parents, its teachers, its adult groups, - must give more attention to the basic question of aims and objectives;
- (4) What is the relation of the Sunday school to the weekday school and to plans for "religion in American education?" If the day school, the Sunday school, and the weekday church school are all to make some contribution toward Christian nurture what is to be the specific functions and responsibility of each? This is still an unsolved problem.

## 2. The Young People's Fellowship

The Youth Fellowship is regarded as so important that church statistics, however abbreviated, always include the membership of the youth organization. The strength of the Youth Fellowship rests in its success in bringing young people to commitment to the Christian life

loyalty to the church, and growth in Christian character. Its weakness often rests in the tendency to regard it as a separate entity from the church.

In recent years, the effort of denominational agencies to develop youth fellowships with the basic idea that all the young people in the church are "the young people of the church" has done something to correct this tendency to consider youth work as something apart from the ongoing life of the church. The emphasis is placed upon the oneness of all the young people of the church as they unite in fellowship for mutual helpfulness, personal satisfaction, spiritual growth and group fellowship. The functioning of the youth of the church as a part of a redemptive fellowship then becomes more important than the success of an organization as an entity in itself.

It should be recognized, however, that despite the sincere effort of the denominational youth departments to develop a unified program in the local church, a large portion of local churches still cling to a two-fold appeal to young people, urging them to "join the young people's society" and to "be members of a Sunday school class"; and all too often the programs themselves have overlapped.

If we continue to stress organization we of necessity fail to begin with the needs of youth. For if one organization (centering around an evening meeting, for example) approaches youth, so may another organization (e.g. the senior department of the Sunday school). And between the two programs there may be but little relationship. If we begin with the fellowship of the youth of the church, however, rather than with organization, we can then proceed to the question of a suitable program for this youth fellowship. Do we not need to break away from the tradition of promoting young people's organizations as such?

This viewpoint is leading many to work against unrelated youth groups and in the direction of a unified youth program, under one leadership, with responsibility for as many meetings and activities as seem best, expanding the youth work of the church throughout the week to meet the needs of contemporary youth, including in the total program of the church such church-related agencies as the Y.M.C.A., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls and the 4-H Clubs; but all together constituting the program of the youth fellowship of the church. The youth fellowship needs its worship, study, recreation, service, fellowship, and outreach to enlist others. It must include an emphasis on personal and social religion; seek to share in the church's task of evangelism, missions and stewardship; and share with all Christians the development of an ecumenical spirit and the task of building a Christian world order.

Young people may carry on certain classes Sunday morning which, for convenience, are regarded as a part of the Sunday church school, and certain other meetings Sunday evening which, for convenience or through custom, are unrelated to the Sunday church school. But as we think of the needs of youth and the task to be done must we not unify our approach to youth and permit no competing organizations?

Shall we not also insist that the youth group is a part of the church - not merely "related" to it but in it and of it. Otherwise

there is real danger that, - with no sense of being a part of the church, with a separateness that has in it no carry-over into the life of the church, - when its members cease to be of the youth age they will cease to be of the church at all. Thus we face this second problem: Just how can the youth group of the church best be made an integral part of the church itself?

Developments in youth work have been a significant part of the religious education of the past two decades. If it continues to go forward it must have certain characteristics:

- (1) A good measure of self-determination on the part of the young people themselves, but protected at two points: it must be self-determination under the guidance of competent adult advisers who function as more experienced members of the group itself; and it must be conceded from the beginning that the program is within the framework of the church, and not as if it had no church roots at all.
- (2) Training for leadership through experience. No better method of training has been found than that which has its basis in experience and the program of the youth group lends itself admirably to this kind of leadership education.
- (3) A reasonable degree of flexibility, so that there is no fixed pattern into which every procedure must fit. Thus there will be wide variation in equally good youth programs and the schedule may be rather free.
- (4) Greater freedom to use a variety of techniques, for the youth program lends itself to this approach more easily than do most areas of church life.
- (5) A strong denominational fellowship bond and, at the same time, an equally strong sense of interdenominational fellowship. This reflects one of the interesting trends in youth work; the pattern of the United Christian Youth Movement and of state youth councils, paralleling a new consciousness of denominational fellowship on national, state and district or association lines. This trend in youth work is merely a counterpart of a similar trend in the church as a whole. If young people are to take their place in the life of their denomination and in the cooperative life of Protestantism later on, they must learn to do so by the way of experience.
- (6) The individual guidance of young people is receiving increasing emphasis in the program of many churches. Counseling for personal growth, for redirecting personality development, for guidance in making vocational choices, and for the development of programs of individual study constitute an important ministry to young people.



Certain major problems confront us that call for careful thinking:

- (1) The integration of youth in the life of the church. Do young people attend the church service of worship? What opportunity does the church give them to share in the planning and work of the church? Does the church make the transition from youth to the age above easy and attractive? To what extent do the adult members put themselves out for young people in a spirit of friendliness, and in allowing them to express themselves on policy and program?
- (2) Inter-relationship between Sunday school and the young people's organization. Are they simply competing with each other and duplicating a program of work, or does each serve a specific need? If the latter, can we succeed in attracting the same constituency for both? Does such a program (Sunday school, church and evening meeting) lay too great a demand on the time of high school boys and girls?
- (3) Closer relationship between the youth work in the local church and youth-serving agencies in the community, recognizing that some community agencies can become an integral part of the program of the church.
- (4) Greater emphasis upon group work with intermediate young people, both for their own sake and in order to prepare them for leadership in older groups.
- (5) Deeper concern to reach unchurched youth with a vital Christian message that will bring deep personal commitment and dedication to service in the Kingdom of God.
- (6) Enlistment and preparation of a larger number of adults for competent leadership of youth.
- (7) Development of a united community approach through the Christian Youth Council or fellowship—on the part of the individual churches so as to give young people a consciousness of their own unity in Christ and to serve as a channel for a united ministry to the youth of the community.

### 3. The Vacation Church School

Through forty years the vacation church school has made its contribution to the religious life of America and to the nurture of boys and girls. It is conservatively estimated that each summer it now enrolls at least 3,000,000 pupils. Any agency of these proportions is not to be regarded lightly. Those who have worked in it most intimately bear glowing testimony as to its value as an agency for Christian training and emphasize its possibilities for future growth.

The vacation church school has been described as "a group of boys and girls and Christian leaders, meeting usually three hours a morning, five days a week, for a period of several weeks, during the summer."

Thus it offers fairly adequate time for religious training, but also a concentrated block of time, which is a real advantage. With a program that can be both indoor and out-of-doors the summer gives a chance for less formality, more variety and greater interest. A school of three weeks' duration furnishes a greater total number of hours than the average for the entire Sunday school program of a year. The attractiveness of the program itself makes it effective as an evangelistic agency to reach those whom the Sunday school has not yet reached. All things work together to make it easier for this to become a laboratory in Christian living than almost any other agency. Clearly the vacation church school has the capacity for making a distinct contribution to the Christian nurture of our children.

The vacation church school is not an orphan. It is a member of the church's Christian education family. And it must be so treated. It must not be promoted as something separate and apart, but utilized as one way of helping the church to realize its religious aims for childhood. The vacation school is not the important thing, but persons; and we use the vacation school along with other agencies to accomplish our objectives for persons. This is but one of many factors that enter into the experiences of boys and girls, -- all of them together working toward their religious development. Obviously, then, the same group that plans these other experiences must plan the vacation school; and it must bring unity into the entire plan.

To be more specific, the church (through its Christian education committee or other responsible agency) plans for its parish. As it considers the children of its parish it knows that they need many different opportunities, -- worship and training in worship, study and fellowship, recreation and service. Some of these will come to them through one agency, some through another; some at one time of year, some at another.

In the vacation school ample place may be given to dramatics, field trips, units on God in nature, Bible geography, map-making, and the like. The church should utilize the vacation school only because it helps to achieve in part, its purposes for children and youth. There should be no unfortunate overlapping. In the matter of curriculum, for example, the total experience of any given year must be kept in mind: weekday church school, Sunday school, vacation school, junior choir, etc. It is in this sense that the vacation school dare not be an "orphan." It must be a part of the Christian education "family" of the church. Only rarely, however, do we see signs of a church thinking of its entire program and making its curriculum plans, for example, for all of its agencies at one time, with a sense of totality and of unity.

If we are realistic we will admit that some who enroll in the vacation school will have no other contact with the church, just as some who are reached by other phases of the church's program will never attend the vacation school. The limited experience does have value, as in the case of children in vacation schools of war-emergency areas. Our planning, however, should be of such a nature that those who take advantage of all that the church has to offer for their age will enjoy a well-rounded program of Christian education without notable overlapping or neglect.

The vacation school suffers from the same evils as does the Sunday school: a minimum budget, volunteer leadership, curriculum materials chosen at random, etc. All too often it tries to get something for nothing and suffers accordingly. Of course, one could give illustrations of schools with trained leaders and adequately supported; but these are in the minority.

The vacation school suffers also from the tendency to hold the length of its session to a minimum, -- just enough to satisfy conscience. Time was when a five weeks' session or a six weeks' session was considered "standard." This dropped to four weeks, then three. In many places a two weeks' school has become the new standard, and frequently we find schools of a single week. These short sessions help but they do not do what the vacation school is supposed to do and what it can do if it extends over a four weeks' or longer period, adequately financed and directed by competent leaders.

To be effective the vacation school must become as fixed a part of the church's program as is the Sunday church school. To hold a session one year, omit it three years, hold it the next, then stop again, makes it so much an "extra" that no planning committee could count on it as a factor in its program. As an illustration of a school operated consistently through a number of years on a community basis, the following statement is included:

"The Community Vacation Church School in Arlington was organized twenty years ago and has continued to operate without interruption since that time. For the first fifteen years it was sponsored by three Protestant churches located in the same neighborhood. During the last five years two other churches have joined with the original three.

The school is directed by a committee of representatives from each of the sponsoring churches. This committee appoints all of the leaders, takes care of finances, chooses the curriculum and gives general supervision to the operation of the school. The teaching staff, in general, consists of the following: a principal, who is also in charge of one of the departments; a superintendent for each of the departments; a director of girls' handwork; a director of boys' handwork; and a number of assistants, depending upon the size of the school. Generally there are two or more in each department.

The school, since the time of its organization, has operated on a four-week schedule, meeting five mornings a week from nine to twelve o'clock. The opening day of the school has usually been fixed approximately one week after public school closes, or about July 1. During the twenty years the enrollment has varied from 146 to 237. In recent years, it has run about 180. The average attendance has been about sixty-five percent. It has been found, in general, that the pupils who remain in town are quite regular in attendance and the relatively poor average attendance is due to the fact that some leave for vacations while the school is in session. Usually there are representatives of a dozen or more churches, including the Catholic church and the Hebrew synagogue.



The members of the staff of the school all receive honorariums of approximately the following amounts for the four-week period: Principal of the school - \$50; Superintendents of departments - \$40; Directors of handwork - \$25; Assistants - \$12. The total budget of the school usually runs about \$400, of which about \$300 is for salaries, the remainder being for supplies and other miscellaneous expenses. The major part of the budget is contributed by the cooperating churches, roughly on the basis of their size. \*\*

If a church or community is to operate a vacation church school successfully, many points must be kept in mind. These may be thought of as Testing Points or Standards of Effectiveness:

- (1) Responsibility. If the church is responsible for all its Christian education activities the church (or its committee on Christian education) must plan for all. The same group that plans the rest of the educational program must be responsible for the vacation school.
- (2) The Minister. His interest, concern, advice and leadership is essential here as elsewhere in the program of the church.
- (3) The Leadership. A principal (more experienced) is needed and a leader for each department (usually four). The requirements in training, experience and time, devoted to the job are so extensive as to make it desirable to provide compensation for the workers in these positions if adequate and continuous leadership is to be provided. Assisting teachers will be needed according to the size of a department. The group needs advance preparation, -- certainly a day's conference and more than that if possible. They must develop a group feeling and a sense of common purpose as well as take adequate time to discuss materials, exchange ideas, and develop plans.
- (4) Curriculum Materials. These will be chosen by the responsible committee in consultation with the principal, bearing in mind what was studied last year, what will be studied next year, as well as the courses used by the same children in Sunday and weekday schools.
- (5) Equipment. Much of the program will be on an activity basis, requiring specialized materials. Worship centers will help. Chairs and tables must be of the proper size for the age. Some play equipment is needed. A community school makes it possible to pool resources and secure better equipment than might be possible for any one church.

\* Arlington is a section of the town of Kearny, New Jersey, with a population of about 15,000. This account is furnished by Mr. Irving R. Smith.

- (6) Budget. The churches must learn to finance their vacation schools adequately and to provide a budget generous enough to insure competent leadership. The regular budget of the church should carry an item to cover the vacation school cost. If this is not possible, special gifts may be secured. In some communities a tuition fee has been found desirable. When it is asked more is expected of the school and the standard is likely to be kept high. It should not be enforced, however, to the point of excluding any who cannot afford to pay. It is better that free will offerings be used for important causes determined by the group (which may include the church that pays the bills) rather than for the expense of the school.
- (7) Publicity. Use it. But the best publicity is that of boys and girls who have attended and like it, and of parents who are convinced of its value. The record of vacation church schools in enlisting new members proves that this is a splendid opportunity for the church to reach out into new homes of the community and to make contacts with boys and girls who heretofore have had little experience with the teaching program of the church.

#### 4. The Weekday Church School

In Gary, Indiana in the fall of 1914, as a result of planning on the part of the Protestant ministers and the superintendent of schools, William Wirt, classes in religious education on "released time" were started in the churches. In the thirty years and more since then, this plan of religious education in cooperation with the public schools has spread throughout America. These weekday church schools are operating in almost 2,000 communities in 46 of the 48 states, enrolling a million and half pupils.

This new kind of church school has certain distinguishing characteristics. It meets during the week at a time when the child is giving his major attention to study, thus relating religion to his general learning program. Because the public school cooperates by sharing time with the churches, the churches are usually expected to adopt high standards for these schools: a teacher as well trained to teach religion as public school teachers are for their work, adequate housing and equipment, a well organized curriculum, an expenditure per pupil proportionate to that for the public school, a representative, well organized, and functioning board of weekday religious education.

Thirty years of experience have revealed what kind of weekday church school program works best:

- (1) A system in which the Protestants pool their resources and provide classes for children irrespective of denominations;
- (2) A system staffed by teachers who are trained and who give all or a large part of their time to this work with remuneration on a par with public school teachers;

- (3) a plan for excusing pupils on a staggered schedule throughout the day and week, rather than having all of them dismissed or released at the same time;
- (4) the use of a parent-signed release card, rather than the expectation that all pupils will enroll and thereby unfairly putting the burden of objecting on the parent who does not wish his child to take religious education;
- (5) adoption of the policy of grading pupils, so far as possible, in accord with their public school grading, rather than grouping several grades to make a religious education class.

This type of church school is reaching many of the "unreached," those fifteen or more millions of boys and girls not connected with a church or Sunday school. Figures gathered over the thirty year period show that on the average, twenty-five per cent of the pupils enrolled in the cooperating Protestant type of weekday church school are from this unreached group. Where churches are alive to their opportunities, half of these newly discovered boys and girls are brought into church and Sunday school affiliation within a year.

Success of weekday church schools requires careful and prolonged planning. This will in most cases require a year from the time the plan is first proposed until classes are ready to open. It is significant that in communities where schools have flourished for a year or a few years and then died out, the reasons can almost always be summarized in the one phrase "hasty and unwise planning."

The right kind of planning includes proper clearance with those of other faiths, setting up a Protestant organization adequate to the holding of schools, education of the churches, financing, provision for building and equipment, selection of curriculum, selection and training of teachers. The Ten Point Platform for weekday church schools of the International Council of Religious Education is a valuable guide to planning for churches and communities.

Many questions arise:

- (1) Will this system become sufficiently general to meet the needs of Protestant youth? Through thirty years it has increased but slowly, and now, after 30 years, it enrolls only about one-twelfth as many as does the Sunday church school.\* Will Protestants pay what is required to open weekday religious instruction to all? Does the interest found in some quarters in parochial schools for Protestant children (especially very young children) have any bearing on this question?
- (2) Is this a substitute for the Sunday school, or another agency doing a similar type of work, or another agency capable of making a unique contribution, with its own recognized field? At

\* It should be added, however, that although the weekday school enrolls a much smaller number, it has a better record than the Sunday church school for efficiency and for attendance percentage.



present the typical weekday school is in no sense integrated with the church's total educational program. A study of the curriculum situation makes this clear. Often a local church has but little voice in the weekday school and its program is not related to that of the church itself. Religious education leaders must agree on a policy.

- (3) If we are seeking instruction in "the facts of religion" or "basic religious knowledge" as over against sectarian teaching, as some hold, is this a legitimate field for the public school itself or does this belong to the weekday church school? Among religious education leaders opinion is divided; but there is sufficient strength to the position of those who advocate that this must again become the work of the public school to call for a new approach to the whole problem. If the public school assumed this responsibility would this make the weekday church school unnecessary or change its function? Would this become the basis for a different type of Sunday work? Until some answer is found the weekday church school will continue its uncertain path.
- (4) If the weekday church school movement is to continue how is the curriculum situation to be improved? Today this problem cries for attention. City after city and state after state issues its own materials because the attempts at interdenominational materials have been so inadequate. The weekday curriculum must be intergrated with that of the public school and also with that of the Sunday school. This whole question of materials for the weekday school needs careful study, but only after the function of the weekday school and its relation to other agencies has been determined.
- (5) If the weekday church school movement is to continue how is the teacher problem to be settled? The supply of adequately prepared and available teachers is so low that the success of the movement is seriously jeopardized. Steps must be taken to recruit and train workers for weekday church school as a professional career.

## 5. Young Adult Groups

During the past decade the church has shown signs of a growing and more intelligent interest in the young adult. The war years have magnified this interest and have raised new questions: Does our definition of the young adult need to be re-defined? Does the transition period come even earlier than we had thought? How can we recognize young adults as a group by themselves and at the same time avoid the perils of over-compartmentalization in the life of the church? The post-war years must show no slackening of interest in this age.

The church has been driven to give special attention to young adults because it has been losing them so tragically. Studies have revealed that the greatest drop from active church life has come about

the period of the twenties and that some new strategy is needed at this age to transform disloyalty or a mere nominal loyalty to the church into active loyalty. As a result there have been organized innumerable young adult groups in churches all over the country. One study of 222 such groups\* made clear that the matter of first importance was that such an organization be primarily a fellowship group. There have been but few attempts to standardize such groups in the matter of name, organization, or program. Different names can be listed by the hundreds - perhaps by the thousands. Variations in the organization pattern are very great. But it is clear that young adults do not want to duplicate the pattern of the youth group or to be handed a standardized name and type of organization. The program is important; but while willing to utilize the experience of others, most groups want to determine their own program.

At least three different approaches to young adults appear in our churches:

- (1) What can we get from them?
- (2) What can we do for them?
- (3) What can be done through them and by them for the church and for themselves and for the type of life and kind of world for which the church stands?

The first is the worst, but one that is all too common in our churches. It is the third that is needed.

To this end the church must make more use of its young adults. When one considers the responsibility that some of them carried in the war it seems almost ludicrous to think of the hesitancy of the church in placing significant tasks upon their shoulders. Some have gone so far as to advocate that on every significant committee and in every important office the group under 35 should have representation.

Just as the twenties and thirties refuse to hold to the pattern of youth in their church life, so it is true that they are less likely than at any other time to be challenged by "the usual." The more "pioneering" the service is, the more appealing will it seem.

The young adult field is still comparatively new. It means something that the church is becoming conscious of it and is realizing that it can never have a total Christian program as long as it neglects this important age. This time of life is one of new experiences, real transition, constant reappraisal. It is the time of home-making, of vocational beginnings, of civic responsibilities. The church that has no ministry to young adults has lost its opportunity.

Never before has the church's opportunity at this point been greater. Of the millions in uniform in the second World War the great majority were "young adults." As they return to civilian life, is the church ready for them? Or will the majority return to their home

\* See Gleason, Geo., Church Group Activities for Young Married People, a study of 222 such groups in Southern California.

communities, but be missing from the life of the church? Are they as some have feared, in danger of developing a "churchless religion?"\* Let us not expect too much from the predictions of those who have talked most eloquently of "fox-hole religion." Not many who left home without a vital religion have returned with a vital religion. But they have had experiences on which an alert church may build; a favorable experience with a chaplain, perhaps; or a first-hand view of Christian missions in the South Pacific. These are mere points of contact from which the church may start.

When does one become a "young adult?" You cannot leave the matter entirely to the person's own feeling: "If you feel like a young adult you must be one!" For others may not accept our youthful estimate of ourselves! Neither is this merely a matter of age. The old regulations to the effect that the 24th birthday marked the distinction between youth and adulthood was purely arbitrary and, in practice, has long been discarded. A better approach to the problem was made by the Committee on the Religious Education of Adults and the Committee on the Religious Education of Youth of the International Council of Religious Education when they suggested the following statement as a guide;

- (1) No single factor marks the transition of a young person to adulthood.
- (2) Attainment of adulthood comes about as an achievement of many experiences, the most powerful of which are:
  - a. Chronological age
  - b. Leaving school
  - c. Marriage
  - d. Self-support
  - e. Voting age
  - f. Permanently leaving home
  - g. Military service
- (3) This achievement is not a matter of attainment of three or four from this list of seven; rather it is contingent upon vividness and intensity. One or two only may be so powerful as to catapult the youth into adulthood before the normal time of that change.
- (4) Participation in the young adult program, therefore, will be dependent upon attainment of maturity in accordance with the above criteria, with the understanding that the upper limit of participation in the youth department shall be approximately the twenty-fourth birthday, varying with denominational practice.
- (5) Decisions about the placing of individuals in the proper department of the local church will have to be made locally. No nationally made rule of thumb will apply. In most instances the classification of an individual will take place naturally and satisfactorily on the basis of personal interest and group associations. In other instances a decision will have to be made on the basis of the criteria outlined in items (2) and (4) above.

\* See Burkhardt, Roy, The Church and the Returning Soldier, Chapter II, Harpers, 1945.



- (6) ... it shall be the responsibility of the youth leaders to prepare persons for the seven transition experiences in (2) above, and the responsibility of young adult leaders to provide guidance and interpretation of these experiences as they occur...\*\*

From the standpoint of people the ultimate aim of the church is to provide for the needs - all the needs - of everyone. From the standpoint of the church the great aim is to develop a fellowship of Christians who will live out their ideals and make the church effective in achieving its mission in the world. Both aims call for an exaltation of the church, with a sense of unity in the whole church family. They call for a recognition of the needs of each normal group, - by itself enough to satisfy some of these needs and with a program that covers its own interests and reaches out to something bigger as well. The program of the Kingdom of God. The problem is to strike a happy balance, - to provide for young adults by themselves and at the same time to bring them into the whole life of the church, with a loyalty to the church that increases while the loyalty to the smaller group decreases.

#### 6. Adults and Adult Organizations in the Church

How seldom are adult agencies thought of as having any relations to the educational program of the church! Learning is for children or for adolescents, people think! And when "adult Christian education" is urged, the expression, all too often, seems to refer only to men and women as leaders of children and youth.

But men and women have needs of their own, as great as they have ever had in their lives. The conviction is growing that the most important emphasis in Christian education today is at the adult level. Ours is largely an adult world, whose policies are fixed by the more mature; and those who are more mature are setting the standards and creating the behavior patterns in home and church and community. At a time when society in general is stressing adult education the church must not lag behind. Although we give lip service to the doctrine that adult education is basic we continue to organize our local churches, our denominational agencies, and our interdenominational work as if it were of secondary importance. This poses a primary problem that should no longer be passed by lightly.

Every separate group in the church is potentially a training agency. Even though they bear no such name, and even though they have not been organized with this as an objective they do have educational possibilities. Elected church officers come in this category; for their responsibilities may be made the occasion of careful training and real growth. The same is true of church committees, whose work may be lifted out of the routine and made the occasion of personal growth, deeper insights and better understanding of the area of their responsibilities.

Thus the ongoing, organized work of the church is far more than machinery; it may be merely that, but sometimes, fortunately, it is a learning opportunity; far more often it could be a learning opportunity for men and women. Probably the chief agency of adult education in the average church is the Sunday morning service. The sermon, the Bible reading, and other elements of worship represent the major amount of Christian education for most men and women. This is essential. But more is needed.

The church has adult organizations, clearly recognized as such. There may be the Men's Brotherhood, the Women's Missionary Society, the Ladies' Aid, the Women's Guild, the Men's Bible Class, the Couples' Club. Each may fulfill some particular function but at the same time each faces some danger:

- (1) Tradition: It may exist because it has existed so long, no one stopping to raise the question whether it is needed, whether it overlaps another agency, whether it performs an important function.
- (2) Exclusiveness: Many independent, unrelated agencies may be liabilities, not only because they overlap, not only because they fail to reach the entire adult constituency, but because they are magnified to the point where they become ends in themselves, - not the creatures of the church, but substitutes for the church in the affections of their members.
- (3) Inadequacy of program: Superficial needs may crowd out vital needs. When we perpetuate agencies because they have existed so long and merely do the things that these agencies have always done, we are in danger of losing the opportunity for service and spiritual growth and educational training that adult organizations ought to give. A study of a large number of Women's Societies revealed this fact, - that the major elements of their programs were the raising of money and the serving of suppers. No disparagement of the values involved in these activities is intended when it is suggested that vast areas of opportunity were being crowded out entirely.
- (4) Organization over-emphasized: Where there are overlapping agencies bidding for people's support the agency itself is magnified out of all proportion to its importance. People come to think of this society or that club as the object of loyalty instead of the values for which the agencies are supposed to exist.

A new approach was made a few years ago when the United Christian Adult Movement was launched. Whether or not that expression ever becomes popular, the ideas for which it stands are sound. Conscious of the needs of the world and of the responsibilities that lie at our doors, men and women of many states and denominations began to recognize that advance must come on the adult level. The slogan chosen was "Study, Worship, and Action" in the important areas of life, of which seven were named: The Bible in Life, Personal Faith and Experience, Christian Family Life, Church Life and Outreach, Community Issues, Social Problems, World Relations.

In theory, at least, this became the adult program in denomination after denomination and in national interdenominational agencies. Something of the sort needs to be brought beyond theory into practice. The adult life of the church can find much of its program right here: it greatly needs study and worship and action in relation to the major areas of experience. How can our Protestant forces make the program of the United Christian Adult Movement gripping and vital? If it was ill-conceived, by what other means can we secure the results that it sought to achieve? Cooperative Protestantism needs an answer to this question.

Existing organizations may find here some sense of direction for the enrichment of their program. The church that makes its starting point, not existing organizations, -- but men and women -- will find here a fruitful field for thought. Are the men and women of your church learning, growing, worshiping, achieving persons? Do they have opportunities along these lines? Are there adult study groups on significant themes? There are opportunities for group worship; is there guidance for individual worship? Are there opportunities for individual and group action toward a more Christian society? The important question is: do the adult organizations of the church believe that they have an educational function? Is their program educationally significant? Does the church so plan for its men and women that they are encouraged to participate -- and actually do participate -- in study groups on religious themes and in other educational opportunities? Is there really an educational approach in First Church or in the church on Main Street toward postwar planning, toward the relations between Christians and Jews, toward problems of the Christian home?

Society is so organized that men and women may always work in separate groups to a certain extent. But the separation is carried too far. Side by side they worship in the Sunday morning service. Why should they not be together also in a week-night study class? Why not face, together, some social issue that calls for intelligent action? Whatever advance is made in women's work and in men's work we need a new advance in adult Christian education, with men and women together at study, at worship, and in action.

## 7. Preparation for Church Membership

Since we are dealing chiefly with "agencies", this section might have been entitled "The Pastor's Class." To have done so, however, would have been to miss the point. Training for church membership includes much more than can ever be included in a Pastor's Lenten Class for young people who anticipate becoming members of the church. Preparation for church membership is an adjustment to the whole life of the church. It is a person's whole experience up to the point of church membership. It includes the religious curriculum that is planned for him, the guided experiences through which he is led, -- in church and home as well. The Pastor's Class frequently (not always) deals with matters of doctrine and beliefs. While it is quite fitting that this instruction should receive particular attention at this very time it is shortsighted to suppose that this experience -- sometimes as brief as an hour a week for six weeks or so, -- constitutes a satisfactory "preparation" for church membership.



Ministers need to dig deeper at this point. Many a pastor who plans with utmost care for this church membership course concerns himself not at all about the church school curriculum during the six or eight preceding years. He may not be aware that texts are being used that are quite out of harmony with the viewpoint of the church. He needs to realize that the "preparation" for church membership began years before the first session of his class.

Preparation for church membership therefore deals with such questions as the Christian home, the church school curriculum, the service activities of boys and girls, their training experiences in worship which, for many, culminate with intelligent participation in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. People must be trained in worship, —

"to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to purge the imagination with the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, and to devote the will to the purpose of God."<sup>\*</sup>

They must learn what the Christian church essentially is, — not a club, a charity, a group which lays down rules to keep people straight, a building, but a divine redemptive fellowship. All definitions of the church are inadequate. But clearly one who is trained for church membership has reached a reasonably satisfactory idea of what the church is. The church is truly called Catholic, in the sense that it is universal in its scope and purpose. The church is the supra-national fellowship. It asserts always that "every man is a child of God and as such has a dignity and status independent of his membership in any state." The church is the supra-racial fellowship. No matter what their color God has no favorites among the races. The church is the supra-class fellowship. God makes no social distinctions. The church is the eternal fellowship. One who is "prepared" for church membership must be growing toward such a conception of the church.

When we have grounded people in some better understanding of the church's nature we must not be afraid to encourage healthy criticism of her past and present weaknesses, for the world will pay little heed to the church if it fails to give convincing evidence that it has the power to correct its own defects.

Preparation for church membership goes farther than up to the time of the act itself. After that has taken place the whole life and program of the church must be an experience in churchmanship. One church has a program described as "completing the act of church membership" — a series of classes or learning experiences designed to bring the new member (young or old) into a real understanding of the work and purpose of the local church, the denomination, and the Christian church in its widest outreach. Training in churchmanship does not stop with the act of membership. It continues, —through worship and participation in the work of the church, through fellowship in the outreach of the church, and through continued learning (even for men and women) in the various areas of the church's life and task.

\* Temple, William, The Hope of a New World, p. 30, Macmillan, 1943

## 8. The Camp and Conference Program

Under this heading we include all such ventures as intermediate camps, young people's camps and conferences, adult camps and conferences, training schools, family camps, summer assemblies, weekend camps, work camps and caravans.

The purpose of the camp and conference program is the same as that of the total religious education program with emphasis on personal development, training in churchmanship and Christian leadership and service, and recruiting for Christian service. While it has the same broad objective of the total religious education program, it is only a small part of that total program and is supplementary to the ongoing program in the local church. It is greatly limited in the number reached in proportion to the total number in the churches, but has an influence on the individual church far out of proportion to the time spent and the numbers reached. Although the program may be similar to that of the home church in many ways the whole atmosphere and spirit of the summer conference tend to heighten its effectiveness and to make it one of the most significant experiences of the year.

The proportions which the camp and conference program has reached in the churches of North America are indicated by the following statistics giving the number of persons attending in some of the denominations which kept count for the summer of 1943:

Associate Reformed Presbyterian	444	Methodist	8,500
Church of the Brethren	4,129	Moravian	600
Church of England in Canada	1,200	Presbyterian U.S.	11,000
(Ontario Province)		Presbyterian, U.S.A.	13,887
Congregational Christian	9,588	Reformed Church	1,460
Cumberland Presbyterian	1,328	United Baptist Maritime	200
Disciples	12,300	United Brethren	3,695
Evangelical	10,331	United Presbyterian	2,014
Evangelical & Reformed	3,090	Wesleyan Methodist	3,650
Free Methodist	4,600	Northern Baptist	11,674

This total of more than 103,000 represents only a part, albeit the major part, of our Protestant summer camp and conference constituency. The figures for some denominations are missing, and there are also many interdenominational conferences not included.

This camp and conference program has ministered largely to young people between the ages of 12 and 24 with emphasis on the older group, from about 16 to 24, (chiefly the 15-18 age-range). But in recent years there has been a rapid growth in the number of camps for the younger group from 12 to 14. There are also adult conferences enrolling a considerable number. The emphasis in some of these is on leadership schools often held on a campus, with the setting and curriculum more formal, but many of the adult camps or conferences are of the enrichment type, rather than to train for leadership, and are built on the needs of men and women themselves, rather than on their responsibilities as leaders of children and youth. Conferences of the United Christian Adult Movement, for example, are of this type.

A number of questions and problems arise that call for new attention and planning:

- (1) The Junior High Camp is still in the experimental stage. Is it not as important as the conference for the senior high school age, and if so what steps can be taken to bring denominational and interdenominational agencies to promote it with equal enthusiasm?
- (2) The Young Adult Conference is still a rarity. Can we get our planning groups to realize its possibilities?
- (3) The Family Camp has had enough experimentation to prove its value. But it is still on the periphery of people's thinking to be considered only after the "essential" conferences have been planned.
- (4) We pay lip service to the theory that adults are as important as young people and that the summer conference program is for both. But churches still act as if the camp and conference movement were a youth movement and planning agencies frequently follow the same course. Without in the least minimizing the value of youth camps how can we magnify the value of similar experiences for adults? And in our promotion of adult conferences how can we overcome the view that the only important type of conference is that which trains for the leadership of those who are younger, to the neglect of the enrichment type concerned with the life of men and women themselves?
- (5) The program of the camp or conference for different age-groups needs constant study. Not only must this be done by denominational agencies but the International Council could render a service by bringing together denominational representatives who might study and profit by one another's experiences.
- (6) The function of the interdenominational conference or camp is still hazy and uncertain. Some think that this is especially true of adult conferences, and camps for the junior and junior-high school ages. Interdenominational youth camps, under the direction of the U.C.Y.M. are set up to train young leaders in the philosophy, purpose and method of community cooperation. It is not clear that this purpose is generally understood by the local church. Should this be their major function or should they be set up to provide advanced or graduate experience? The interdenominational conference cannot assume that it is the graduate experience; it can be so regarded only by mutual agreement. And if it is so regarded there must be more careful guidance on the part of both denominational and interdenominational agencies so that delegates may be sent to the camp for which they are ready.
- (7) The time has come for a careful evaluation of the whole work camp idea with a study of its program and with constructive recommendations.



- (8) Comity in overall planning: Camps and conferences have in many cases sprung up sporadically in response to denominational or local needs. If all are to be given adequate opportunity for this type of experience, steps must be taken which will avoid overlapping and overlooking and which will develop a camp philosophy that will strengthen the whole movement.

## 9. Choirs

Only rarely do people think of choirs as agencies of Christian education. But may they not be? In them are opportunities for a two-fold ministry: (1) the ministry that the choir renders to the people of the congregation, and (2) the ministry that the experience itself renders to the members of the choir. If the task is merely a professional one, with the motive of money rather than of service the major values are lost. If the experience is one of Christian training and Christian service, however, there are values for both participants and hearers that make this an important factor in religious education.

This is why churches often have a children's choir and a youth choir as well as one composed of adults. If there are values in the experience itself, surely children and young people as well as men and women deserve to share in these values. A few specific values might be listed. Members of children's choirs establish the habit of regular worship attendance, gain experiential knowledge of the principles and practices of Christian worship and a growing acquaintance with the rich heritage of Christian hymns, anthems, and sacred music. Children's and young people's choirs become excellent training grounds for senior choirs. The participation of a children's choir in the worship service is an inspiration to the whole congregation, symbolizing the ongoing life of Christian fellowship among persons of all age-groups.

One leader who shares the view that choirs must have values in the Christian growth of the participants hears testimony to the loyalty of former members: "Every week come letters from former members now in service. One paragraph is always about the same: 'miss the choir so much. I can't wait to get back to sing with you all;' or 'I miss the choir so much that I have found a choir here where I am stationed...!'" As she analyses the reasons for this feeling she thinks they are not merely based on good friendships with occasional romances, not only upon a love of music and a desire to participate, but also that "another and more important factor is the very deep human emotion, expressed through music, of religion; the expression of awe toward the universe and its Maker." She adds an expression of the choirmaster's satisfaction in seeing one after another of the choir members join the church and says: "Perhaps no one in the congregation can ever realize the religious feeling of the choir members. They come to know the great passages of the Bible through the most perfect emotional channel, — music."<sup>\*</sup>

\* Miss Mabel S. Reed, Worcester, Mass.

That last sentence might be elaborated to considerable length. A choir experience is a part of one's experience of Christian nurture, but rarely is it so regarded. The leader needs to be chosen, not only for his musical ability, but also because he is a religious person alert to the objectives of Christian education. This whole field must come more and more under the purview of the committee on Christian education in the local church. It is a neglected area in many churches and one that calls for study and planning on the part of our cooperative agencies of religious education.

10. Relationships of the Church to the Community,  
Particularly from the Standpoint of Youth Organizations

The church has an important responsibility in helping young people to find useful places in the life of the community. Through the aid of the church, wholesome, worthwhile services may be rendered and constructive contacts made whereby ideals of Christian living, integrity, and relationships are materially strengthened on the part of the young people of any community.

Participation in the affairs of the community provides many varied experiences such as those involving racial and other social contacts. Such experiences play an important part in the development of the young individual. Moreover, the fact that young people through their own organizations are often encouraged to participate along with their elders in community life provides an important safeguard in developing a stable society in which there is a happily adjusted interplay of the enthusiasm, initiative, and courage of youth with the experience, tolerance and judgment of age. In addition, the more devotedly these young people serve the community, the more interest and pride will they have in its welfare. Thus both the young people and the community are benefited. Participation in community affairs should give young people, especially through their own youth organizations, training in democratic procedures and thus help them to become citizens who will function in accordance with the principles of the democratic way of life. The U.C.Y.M. is increasingly bringing the churches of the community into closer relations with one another and with such agencies as the 4-H Clubs, the Boy Scouts of America, the Girl Scouts of America, the Camp Fire Girls, the Boys Clubs and the Future Farmers of America. It should go farther in this direction.

In any community, much good can be accomplished by the local church as it becomes familiar with the work of such youth organizations, as it becomes acquainted with the leaders, as it provides facilities for successful program development, and as it seeks to discover in what ways various cooperative undertakings may be developed.

On the other hand, all such organizations should welcome this type of cooperation from the church, as it affords a unique opportunity for focusing the attention of young minds on the importance of church participation from the standpoint of the individual, the community, and the church itself. Moreover, cooperation of this type affords an excellent means of impressing upon youth that in any community the

church stands for those religious beliefs and ideals which largely determine the spiritual development of its citizenship; and in encouraging youth to attach themselves to the church of their own choice to the end that their own spiritual life and moral character may be strengthened through the teachings of the church and through contacts with its membership who represent the best interests of community life.

### III. REACHING THE UNCHURCHED (An Extension Program)

Lincoln pointed out the impossibility of America remaining half free and half slave. It is quite as futile to think of America continuing half Christian and half pagan. Christian life is engendered and nourished in and through the Christian church. Accurate statistics, even if such were available, might not prove very helpful, for the Christian life deals primarily with quality, not quantity. There are however, some sobering facts which the church must face. Roughly speaking, half of the population of America is unchurched, and certainly not all church members are vitally related to the Lord of the church, or basically committed to His way of life. Christ's fundamental commission -- to evangelize, to baptize, to teach -- applies to the American church in our day. Our fathers seemed to understand that commission and were impelled by it. The period from 1800 to 1910 saw church membership in America increase from about 7% of the population to approximately 50%. Since 1910 the church has just about held its own with the natural increase in population.

The church's perennial task is to reach out for the unchurched, to bring them under the influence of the Christian gospel, and to unite them in fellowship with Christ in His church. Lest the church concern itself entirely with reaching the unchurched, it would be well to remember that it is equally important to preserve the present membership, to deepen the spiritual life and loyalties of present communicants, to rekindle interest among those who are inactive, and to regain those who have lapsed from the faith.

With the present mobility of American population (which according to the sociologists, may continue for some time) it is exceedingly important that migrating members be transferred promptly to a church near their new home. Membership transfer departments ought to be exceedingly active in every denomination. Long distant memberships in "the old church back home" with all its sentimental ties are in most cases a great handicap for the Christian life of individuals and for the church as a whole. Pastors, church boards, and lay people in general need to think in terms of the church as a whole and of the necessity for affiliation in the resident's community. Christianity is a matter of fellowship in worship and service. That fellowship alone is vital which is at hand for daily living. One of the worst spiritual diseases of the Protestant church in America is "parishitis."

There are scores of ways of reaching the unchurched. After all, the dynamic of evangelism is far more important than techniques. The first century Christian church had its Paul with his stupendous passion



for souls; its Philip who found Nathanael; its Andrew who brought the "good news" to his own brother, Peter, being content thereafter to play "second fiddle" to his more able brother in the apostolic circle. If that dynamic be missing — and it is definitely related to a personal appraisal of the significance of Christ and the importance of the human soul — the technique will be of little avail.

But there are some methods and techniques. When the church thinks of reaching the unchurched it must concern itself with America as it is constituted today. Special conditions are to be found in urban, suburban and rural areas. But the church must think of a ministry to people of all classes, all kinds of racial, national and spiritual backgrounds. It must be as much concerned with the "up and outers" and the "down and outers" as it is with "Mr. and Mrs. Middleclass" and their children.

In order to know community developments, population trends and the like, with any accuracy, community surveys must be conducted, preferably on a cooperative basis. All the cooperating churches should provide suitable workers, who, after a thorough-going training program, will go from house to house until the entire community has been canvassed to discover pertinent facts concerning the religious affiliation of every family. If accurate records are kept and prospects are distributed equitably

to the churches, the results of such canvass and invitation to the unchurched will soon become evident. The pastors of a community can arrange for a fair division of the unchurched — those expressing no particular preference or those having mixed religious affiliations which have brought about spiritual indecision or indifference.

Prompt and persistent follow-up will be rewarding. Carefully trained visitation teams can do much, not only to keep the present church membership spiritually alive, but also to reach out for those "special prospects" which every parish has. Sometimes these people have been included in the so-called "constituency" of the parish but not in its membership. They would include the unchurched parents of Sunday school children; members of some of the church organizations; unchurched members of a family where one or more members are church members; whose names appear on the parish registries because the pastor has performed some official act, such as a baptism, a wedding, a funeral; persons who have visited and inscribed their names upon visitor's registries, visitor's cards or attendance roll call cards. These, together with unchurched persons whose names have been provided by some particular friend or neighbor who is a member of the local parish, constitute a group worthy of special and continued visitations. The pastor will naturally be visiting as much as time will allow, possibly being called in for pastoral counselling with some of these families, but much excellent preliminary work can be done by "visitation teams" and especially by teams of deacons, elders or vestrymen, who must share with the pastor the responsibility for parish evangelism. This visitation evangelism is perhaps most effective at certain seasons of the year, such as Lent, from Easter to Pentecost, or during the early fall season. At these times, visitation work can be given special attention in invitations to attend a series of special services or to enroll in a class or discussion group, leading to church membership. The plan has proven effective for both youth and adults.

American Protestants, we believe, need to re-evaluate the importance of a spiritually united family. Christianity is basically a matter of an individual's relationship to Christ and to his fellow men. But vital Christianity thrives on Christian home and family life. The home is receiving rightful emphasis today as an essential school of Christian living. If little Mary goes to the Baptist Sunday school, while her young brother Johnnie sings in the boys' choir of the Episcopal church, teen-age brother Bill attends the young people's meetings at the Presbyterian church and mother is working in the Ladies' Aid of the Methodist church — then father usually is faithful in staying away from church, and the family as such has neither spiritual unity nor a church home. Every attempt should be made to unify the family spiritually so that the whole family may become a vital part of one Christian fellowship. Much is to be gained from the virile approach of a male visitor directing his appeal to the man of the household. Pastors would do well if they would call on a family by appointment when all the members can have an opportunity to share in the important decision, relative to church affiliation.

It is particularly important that "newcomers" in a community be united with the church soon after their arrival. Spiritual indifference can easily take possession of formerly loyal church members who are slow in establishing new spiritual affiliations. A local church federation can make a very wise investment in engaging a "church visitor" to call on all new arrivals, referring them to the church of their preference.

The church has abundant opportunity every time that services are performed for individuals or families — such as baptisms, confirmations, pre-marital counselling, funerals, etc. — to present earnestly the importance of a vital relationship to Christ and His church. One excellent plan to "employ the unemployed" members of a congregation is to encourage every family to assume the responsibility of acting "good neighbors" to a particular unchurched family living in their vicinity. Kindly Christian interest, patience and persistence have won many families for the Christian church through this "good neighbor" influence.

Thus far we have been sneaking largely of personal contacts which certainly are the most effective means for enlisting the unchurched. Other more impersonal agencies should not be overlooked. Telephone follow ups; letter writing, bulletins and other church literature; educational and evangelistic — but always churchly — tracts delivered in person or through the mails are worthy of mention. Newspaper advertisements and articles, especially where the churches of a community will cooperate in a program which might take for its slogan "a church home for every family" or "every citizen a vitally church related Christian;" and radio programs, which are designed to serve those who have really valid reasons for non-attendance at church and which encourage church and Sunday school attendance and affiliation, may also become effective agencies for reaching the unchurched.

We have been thinking thus far particularly of the adult. Certainly we should not overlook the child and his training in church and Sunday school. Every pastor knows how applicable are the words, "a little child shall lead them," when he thinks of the many families who



have been won for the church of Christ because children have first been enrolled in Sunday schools. Weekday religious instruction on "released" or "dismissed" time, vacation church school, as well as specific Sunday school recruitment or enlargement programs have been found effective agencies for reaching unchurched children. It is just as important that children be encouraged to win another child for Christ and His church as it is to arouse personal evangelism interest among adults.

Mission or "outpost" Sunday schools have brought the church closer to the scattered constituency of many large churches and to many unchurched people. Often these "outposts" become established congregations in time. In the developmental stage it is important to tie the "outpost" Sunday school as completely as possible to the full life of worship, fellowship, and Christian service of the "mother" congregation, thus avoiding the danger of the "outpost" becoming a convenient substitute for the more complete life of the church.

To reach those who are shut in because of health or weather, the inhabitants of sparsely settled areas, and members of small churches where only occasional services are held, enterprising Christians have developed a system of distribution of Sunday school materials by mail for use in a home study program. One church group in Canada, which conducts a radio church for the inhabitants of a very sparsely settled area, has 500 pupils enrolled in 6 different courses covering grades 1 to 5 and grades 8 under this plan.

Every theological seminary in America should give emphasis to the motivation and methodology of evangelism, preferably by such persons as have had rich personal experience in some of the proven methods of reaching the unchurched.

But evangelism must be positively related to Christian education. It would be quite futile for the church in America to expend a great deal of God-given energy to acquire thousands of new members if little concern were given to keeping them in church membership. A vital relationship to Christ and His church must have depth, stability and wearing qualities. It is little short of tragic to encourage "the quick starters" and "easy joiners" whom we welcome enthusiastically at the front door of the church, only to see them continue quickly on out through the back door, lost to the cause of Christ because our "processing" was too fragmentary and short-lived. Evangelism must also be related to social action, but this is included in Christian education in its broader sense.

It is important to be concerned about a personal and voluntary commitment to Christ as Lord and Redeemer and to solicit expressions of loyalty to church, but it is futile and unfair for the church to look for such commitments and expressions of loyalty until the church is willing to invest the time and resources necessary to properly instruct prospective members in the implications of those commitments. The bald fact must be realistically taken into account by the Protestant Church of America --we are, by and large, a spiritually illiterate nation. Millions of people have never had sufficient Christian instruction to understand the basic essentials of Christian faith and life. "Anemic



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moralisms" have often been substituted for the Word of God, for basic Biblical teaching concerning sin and divine grace, the great historic statements of Christian faith.

Every new member of the Christian church has a right to be thoroughly instructed in the life and thought of the church. Emphasis should be placed upon the value of attending divine services regularly; of possessing an ability to make fruitful use of the Bible; of understanding the fundamentals of our ecumenical Christian faith applied to personal and social living; of possessing an elementary knowledge of church history and certainly of the structure, the institutions and the polity of that branch of the church of Christ with which affiliation is being established. Appreciation of worship, the hymnody, customs and usages of the church; and an intelligent understanding of and participation in Christian stewardship, not only of money but of all of life is also highly desirable.

After receiving this instruction, which of course will vary with individuals and with local conditions, members should be received into the church in as impressive a way as possible at an important worship service. They should be orientated in the local church's life and made to feel at home in its fellowship and then immediately put to work in some selected phase of the parish program of Christian service.

#### IV. THE EXPERIMENTAL ATTITUDE

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There is no evidence that any particular type of church organization for Christian education is the one best suited to achieve its objective. In some churches the Sunday school is the most effective, in others the youth group, in still others the vacation church school. Moreover, there has been enough experimentation with new patterns of accomplishing the old purposes to make us hesitate to defend any particular agency because of its long history or because of what it may have done for any particular individual. These new patterns include such things as the camping movement, the junior church, education by radio, direct service of family groups in the home, neighborhood groups, various types of activities for young adults, and many others. The point of importance seems to be that the objective of Christian education must be clearly conceived, and the means used for its achievement that are most appropriate to any particular situation. It sometimes happens that the old things can best be done in new patterns because new patterns draw new enthusiasms to them.

It is proper therefore that those who are charged with the carrying on of Christian education retain the experimental attitude of mind. Let us continue to look for new patterns through which to do our work more effectively. We need to be alert to our changing culture. We are in an industrial society, and this changes the situation materially. Varying working shifts, for example, make us know that not all can come to the church at the same hour. One has a right to enquire whether the church is to move along the same path, using the same patterns, without any adjustment to meet new situations.

Let us not be too anxious to maintain old patterns after they have outlived their usefulness. Let us remember, however, that Christian education requires long, sustained, and serious attention to a purpose, which cannot be had through any new fad which may seek to sweep everything before it because of the way in which it has worked in some particular church or community.

One thing has become abundantly clear from our investigation. Christian education as it exists in many places has a far broader base than the Sunday school which at one time was the only agency of the church for this purpose. Many persons are receiving far more than a single hour of religious education per week, and many who could not be touched by one or another of the traditional agencies for religious education are nevertheless being reached by those agencies which are able to appeal to them. What is needed is an underlying philosophy which can see persons and their needs, and utilize the agencies of religious education, whether new or old, to make such contributions as each is best able to make, all directed toward an integrated whole.

## V. ORGANIZATION

To develop a program of Christian education in the church as here conceived requires a church organization through which it can function. Characteristics of this organization will include the following:

- (1) Comprehensiveness. The organization for Christian education must be so comprehensive that it can effectively utilize all the activities of the church, and in turn influence them. It must be able to reach every member of the constituency for his improvement and growth. It must be able to plan a balanced program for each person in the constituency, utilizing any or all the above agencies and patterns as needed, and devising new ways of achieving desired results when old patterns do not serve.
- (2) Unity. An adequate organization makes possible a unified program of Christian education. This means that the various contributions of the several agencies and auxiliaries will be worked into a single pattern for maximum impact on any person. It means further that a specific job may be allotted to each agency working with a given age group, so as to provide comprehensiveness and balance without duplication or omissions. Any person may engage in a wide variety of activities, but somewhere in the overhead planning there is unity and purpose in all that is provided for him.
- (3) Authority. The body charged with planning and carrying on the church's program of Christian education must so represent the church that it has power to function in the areas of its work. This does not mean arbitrary or dictatorial power. It does mean, however, that authority to do a job of work is delegated, with the necessary power to carry it on. When the organization for Christian education is representative of the agencies and auxiliaries of the church, and helps them in carrying out their

aims, there will be no sense of competition for authority, but rather of functioning in cooperation to the mutual benefit of each.

- (4) Distribution of Leadership. When Christian education is properly organized, it distributes widely the responsibility for the communication of the Christian faith within the fellowship. This will make available for the service of Christian education the various talents and interests of different members of the constituency. It will avoid the overworking of a few faithful persons. Thus it will provide many persons with the discipline which comes from service to the church. There is perhaps no more important way for vitalizing the Christian faith in persons than the responsibility for communicating that faith to others.
- (5) Adequate Budget. When Christian education is regarded as not merely an adjunct but a part of the main business of the church, it follows that it must share adequately in the financial resources available for the work of the church. The kind of program here considered cannot be carried out with the offerings of the pupils in the program. Nor is this desirable. The offerings of pupils in the church school should be contributed to the causes represented in the total church budget, so as to constitute training in Christian giving. The church budget, in turn, should provide for adequate financial undergirding of the church's educational program.

Distribution of leadership responsibility requires a plan for integration if effort is not to be scattered and dissipated. There needs to be a guiding spirit for the entire educational program. He must be able to see the whole purpose and program of the church, and the educational program in all its phases. In most churches no one other than the pastor is able to do this. The lay superintendent may be competent to conduct the Sunday school, but in most churches he does not have the time or the ability to head up the whole program. Some churches are able to employ a minister of Christian education for this work. This, however, does not relieve the pastor from responsibility for keeping in close touch with the educational activities. While the minister of education may carry a large share of the actual work, he and the pastor must work in closest harmony if a properly integrated program is to result.

The Sunday church school superintendent will have immediate responsibility for the Sunday school. Coordinate with him these needs to be a principal for the vacation church school, and in some cases where there is no unified youth program, a counselor for the Sunday evening activities for youth.

It remains for us to explore the type of church organizations which will best embody these characteristics and assure a comprehensive and well-balanced program. Two major types of organization have been proposed.

One of these is the Board of Christian Education plan. This provides that the church erect a Board of Christian Education which shall be given responsibility for all Christian educational activities in the



church. It will study the needs of the church and the community, and the resources with which to meet those needs. In light of this study it will project a program which will touch not only the children and young people of the church but the church's entire constituency. It will utilize the existing organizations of the Sunday school, youth fellowship, vacation church school, and others, but it will seek other ways in which parts of the constituency not adequately reached by those institutions can be touched with effective Christian education.

The strength of this plan is that it sets aside a responsible body for the development of Christian education in the church. Its weakness lies in the fact that a Board of Christian Education must be paralleled by other boards carrying other interests, and therefore being put in the position of competing with other interests in the church. It is obvious, for example, that missions should not be made a parallel interest with Christian education, for Christian education without missions is not complete Christian education; and missionary activity without education in missions is likely to be limited to the few who have become missionary-minded in some other way, or else become merely a matter of promoting missions.

The second plan calls for a general planning board for the entire church. It assumes that Christian education must be included within the total interests and activities of a church. It provides therefore for a board of strategy which has in charge the planning of the entire church program, including Christian education. In this planning body the various interests will be represented, such as missions, stewardship, social action, Christian education. There may be special committees on each of these interests but they do not approach the constituency directly but see to it that their interest is adequately represented in the total plan and program through the general planning board. This plan has the advantage of putting Christian education in proper perspective, without setting it apart as a separate function. It has the disadvantage that a general planning board may submerge education because of the many and varied interests with which it must deal.

Under such a general planning board, by whatever name it may be called, it is possible to charge a subcommittee with all the church activities for youth, and another with all the activity for adults, and still another for the development of a program for church help to the home. Thus may the Christian education activity of a church become an integral part of its total purpose and program, the needs of each person in the constituency be adequately considered, and agencies and auxiliaries utilized for what contribution they may best make.

It is not the purpose of this report to recommend one or another type of organization. Much will depend on what is possible and desirable in a given church. There are no doubt many ways in which local plans can be worked out to satisfy the requirements of the ideals here set forth. This report would, however, go on record as unqualifiedly opposed to the separation of the church's program into such separate and independent parts as the church service, the Sunday school, the young people's fellowship, each with its own constituencies and loyalties, without adequate integration into the total program.

In conclusion, let us take a look at the entire church constituency from the standpoint of its various age-groups.

We think first of the children of the church. It is encouraging to note a tendency away from the setting up of special organizations to further specific interests, but instead to think of the children's division of the church or of the church school (using "church school" in its broader sense). The needs of the child take precedence over organization. The child is in the school of the church — sometimes in the Sunday church school, sometimes in the church worship service, — but never in an independent children's group unrelated to the church and its program for childhood. The child needs worship experience and training in worship, instruction in the Bible and the Christian faith and tradition, guidance in Christian living, an understanding of the church and a growing experience in its life and work, service opportunities and social experiences. There is no reason why these needs should be met by half a dozen independent organizations; a single agency with a well-rounded program and under the direction of the church is to be preferred. The logical agency for so doing, whatever its name, is the school of the church. For these are children of the church.

In so far as young people are concerned, all too often the church has permitted a two-fold or a three-fold appeal, urging them to "join the young people's society" and to "be members of a Sunday school class;" and all too often the programs themselves have overlapped. The difficulty is that organization is given precedence over persons. We begin not with organization but with persons — the youth of the church. Fortunately the idea of the youth fellowship of the church is growing.

When we come to adults, we ask: Is the Sunday school a teaching agency for them also? In a large number of churches there is no question at this point: of course the Sunday school reaches men and women as it does children. In other churches this is not the case and they do not intend that it should be. Our committee regards this as unfortunate, and insists that where it is the case the church should have a satisfactory answer to the question: What learning opportunities are planned and provided for adults? Surely there should be some, in a variety of areas and adequate in numbers. In addition to the Sunday service of worship, in addition to the educational effect of the church life and atmosphere, in addition to the training value of office-holding and committee work, men and women need classes or courses or discussion groups on important themes — learning experiences that are recognized as such by all.

## APPENDIX: THE PASTOR AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Whether or not our philosophy of the church and Christian education prevails in any particular church, and whether or not the various agencies of religious education in the church are operating effectively is dependent upon the minister more than upon any other individual. What is the minister's philosophy and what is his attitude toward this whole field? Obviously one cannot form a judgment on the basis of an occasional magazine article or a single strong statement either pro or con. Though one be very vocal he is still just one.

The Committee on the Local Church Program tried to secure the viewpoints of various ministers in different states, some speaking alone, and some as members of small discussion groups. Thus the positions of about one hundred men\* were tabulated. Many of them were from rural or small-town areas. What they have to say is centered about seven questions which are here given with some digest of their comments:

Question I. WHEN "THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH" IS MENTIONED WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST REACTIONS?

- 22 think of the total program of the church; the task of the church for all ages
- 13 think of the church school, or perhaps the Sunday school and the youth group
- 8 think of teachers or the problem of teacher training (Some remark that we need better teachers, that some are fine but that there is lack of training, that too many are indifferent, that it is difficult to secure them.)
- 8 suggest that we should speak of Christian Education rather than religious education (one speaks of his "irritation at the word 'religious' in religious education")
- 11 stress the inadequacy of religious education and note that there is a place for much improvement. (Such expressions as these are used: "the weak spot in the program", "many improvements needed", "we are not building foundations that are sure").
- 9 speak of various unfavorable reactions, e.g., "dry as dust conferences on the subject", "seminary professors whose lectures were dry" "some of my people hit the ceiling when religious education is mentioned", "it makes me think of God with a minus sign; it does not help them to God", "between disappointment and frustration", "the materials are difficult", "the entire program is too indefinite with too little time", "there is an over-emphasis on it", "we should put religious education and evangelism together", "a headache", "this is the hardest part of my work", "lack of interest by church people".
- 12 indicate reactions that are uncertain as to favorableness or unfavorableness, for example: "not clear", "should be more Bible centered", "what do we mean by it?", "the need of equipment", "too much emphasis on religious education as though it could be set apart", "it should lead to decisions for Christ", "a neglected field".



- "our objectives," "awareness of how many are being helped and at the same time a feeling that the church school is sick," "too little attention given to small and weak churches," "a study of comparative religions."
- 10 stress its importance with such expressions as, "supremely important" or "important part of the church work," or "the biggest job in the church and the hardest to solve," or "the strategic importance of an enlarged training program of the church."
- 6 mention other favorable reactions, for example, "interest and enthusiasm," "satisfaction," "a desire to cooperate," "teaching Bible truth," "a hopeful attitude," "better days ahead."

Question II. WHEN YOU THINK OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN YOUR CHURCH WHAT ARE YOUR MAJOR CONCERNS? WHAT ARE THE THINGS THAT BOTHER YOU MOST?

- 49 mention inadequate leadership stressing the fact that we need better training, more training classes, more desire for training, more capable people as teachers and leaders. One speaks of the need of a better superintendent, and one thinks that the fault lies with the minister.
- 8 stress the place of the home, including the indifference of parents and the lack of a Christian home atmosphere.
- 9 emphasize the lack of concern in the church members themselves, one including the minister in particular.
- 7 stress inadequate grounding in Christian truth, saying that too little attention is given to the doctrines and the history of the church, to the cross, to a faith that meets the needs of the day, and to a spiritual program.
- 8 speak of attitudes, motives, standards, goals, etc.
- 4 emphasize the evangelistic message, saying that this is too often omitted and that we need training also for church membership.
- 22 emphasize reaching the unreached (8 think of small children who are unreached, 6 think of youth, one thinks of young adults, 4 think of adults, and 5 speak of all ages.)
- 10 speak of the curriculum, saying that "materials are difficult," that "Bible study is disjointed," that "there is not enough missionary education," etc.
- 5 speak of equipment.
- 4 note the fact that better methods are needed.
- 4 speak of lack of adequate time.
- 9 speak of certain specific needs, such as "training ordained and professional leaders in church colleges," "developing appreciation for persons and property," "the need for a more unified church program," "transportation," "a better approach to a Portuguese group in the community," "finances," "the coordination of the program," and "that Christian education be truly Christian."

- 1 criticizes professional religious educators for not adjusting themselves to ministers who lag behind in their educational philosophy.
- 1 criticizes the overemphasis on techniques.

Question III. A. IN SO FAR AS THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OF YOUR CHURCH IS EFFECTIVE AND SIGNIFICANT WHAT ARE THE REASONS?

- 52 speak of the teachers and leaders ("consecrated" or "trained" or "capable" or "liberal" or "with interest in the problem," etc.)
- 2 speak of the increasing number of leaders with a pragmatic approach to religious education.
- 3 speak of pastors.
- 12 stress good materials.
- 11 speak of long-range planning or careful preparation, or "continually working at it."
- 2 speak of regular monthly conferences.
- 3 emphasize pupil interest.
- 2 speak of good equipment.
- 2 speak of the cooperation of the home.
- 12 emphasize various points, such as "my wife," "worship," "a program of adult education," "organization," "interest in young people," "the worship programs," "the habit of home visitation," "church interest," "aims that are understood," "up-to-date methods," "an active youth fellowship," "some active Pilgrim Fellowship girls," etc.

B. IN SO FAR AS IT IS UNSUCCESSFUL AND INEFFECTIVE WHAT ARE THE REASONS?

- 45 speak of the teachers and leaders ("not trained," "not consecrated," "with more thought of self than of religion," "not sufficiently interested," etc.)
- 17 speak of the lack of concern or cooperation on the part of the church in general.
- 13 mention the home (parents who are indifferent or have no vision.)
- 10 blame the materials as being poor or ill adapted.
- 7 speak of poor equipment.
- 5 speak of a failure to adopt new methods, a program that is behind the times.
- 4 speak of no teacher planning conferences.
- 5 say that the time is insufficient.
- 2 put the blame on the superintendent.
- 2 speak of irregular attendance.
- 3 speak of transportation problems.
- 10 others mention various factors, such as "no home visitation," "too little social program," "lack of study by pupils," "too much methodology," "men lacking," "the leadership turnover too rapid," "lack of information," "poor organization," "too long a gap between sessions," "too little emphasis on worship," and the "spirit of the times."

Question IV. A. WHAT TRENDS IN THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF YOUR CHURCH ARE YOU CONSCIOUS OF THAT SEEM TO BE FOR THE BETTER?

- 3 say there are no such trends.
- 23 say greater interest on the part of leaders, an increased desire for growth and leadership training. (Some say teachers are more willing to make preparation. One speaks of "a sense of dissatisfaction with things as they are" as being encouraging.)
- 8 say gain in attendance (or reaching more people).
- 2 say the home is more interested.
- 5 speak of weekday classes.
- 4 speak of vacation schools or camp programs.
- 1 speaks of attendance at summer conference.
- 10 stress better materials (one saying that lessons are now "Christ-Bible-Life centered").
- 1 speaks of family and home education.
- 3 speak of more emphasis on the Bible.
- 2 speak of growth in missionary interest.
- 2 speak of the closer coordination between Sunday school and church (one indicating that there is a "unified program").
- 1 speaks of an interest "in the church service and away from the Sunday school."
- 4 say that evangelism is coming back.
- 1 says that "outpost work" is being stressed.
- 1 says that they are now reaching all ages.
- 2 speak of better grading.
- 3 mention an increase in adult classes.
- 1 mentions a school of religion, instead of the evening service, ("the most interesting thing in our church").
- 2 speak of reaching young adults.
- 6 mention young people, including junior-high age, as an encouraging point.
- 7 speak of better worship (and more "enjoyment" of worship), one of them indicating an "interest in worship and away from study."
- 3 indicate a growing realization that goals are needed.
- 3 speak of the trend toward a personal application of all teaching.
- 2 mention the Committee on Religious Education and its good work.
- 2 speak of better methods (one noting a better use of handwork.)
- 3 mention more originality and willingness to experiment.
- 2 mention better equipment.
- 3 speak of the growing concern for the needs of the small school.
- 1 notes the growing respect for the faith of others.



B. WHAT REGRETTABLE TRENDS DO YOU NOTE?

- 2 say there is nothing regrettable.
- 15 speak of a lack of adult interest and participation; complacency.
- 2 say there are no training opportunities.
- 1 says that the emphasis is on training, not on consecration.
- 8 speak of a decline in attendance.
- 2 mention a tendency to try to reach only a select group.
- 1 mentions a lack of evangelism.
- 4 speak of the indifference of the home.
- 1 says the church has been made a school whereas it should be a fellowship of Christian people.
- 1 mentions the unwillingness of the untrained to give place to the better trained.
- 1 says that the worth of secular education overshadows Christian education.
- 1 speaks of the desire for poor materials.
- 4 speak of weaknesses in the program, i.e., the Bible insufficiently emphasized, inadequate education in temperance, missions, Christian economics.
- 3 mention out-moded methods.
- 2 say there is no program.
- 1 speaks of poor equipment.
- 1 mentions inadequate time.
- 4 say that spiritual growth is lacking.
- 1 says that there is no effort to secure real results, such as the development of the "Christian graces."
- 1 says the tendency is to stress numbers rather than the important emphases.
- 1 says that there is no application of the teaching to life.
- 1 speaks of the influence of "holiness" groups that stress short-cut evangelism.
- 3 speak of church and Sunday school as being too much apart.
- 1 says the pastor is made to do all the calling.
- 1 speaks of the lack of provision for adults.
- 7 mention such weaknesses as "leaders moving away," "lack of interest on the part of young people," "inadequate worship services," "insufficient face-to-face relationships," "generalizations," "not being alert to present opportunities."

Question V. IF YOU ARE CRITICAL OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM OF YOUR CHURCH IS YOUR CRITICISM DIRECTED AGAINST RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ITSELF OR AGAINST THE WAY IN WHICH THE TASK IS BEING DONE?

Of those who answered the question definitely and categorically:

- 47 said "against the way it is being done."
- 0 said "against religious education itself" (unless one who said "against the religious education program" meant that).
- 2 said "against both" (one elaborated his answer by saying that it has not produced suitable material for the small or rural church. The other said that "religious education should be more Christian education,... more Christ-centered."

Some whose answers are included in the above tabulation made additional comments. Some who gave no direct answer to the main question made comments. The following are quoted from these comments:

- "I am not critical" (2)
- "Critical only of what we have been unable to do"
- "Critical of the way it is neglected." (5)
- "Religious education is the greatest task of the church."
- "Believe in the value of an expanded Christian education."
- "Believe in religious education provided it is Christian education." (3)
- "Our largest task is to help people comprehend the scope of religious education."
- "Religious education is a #1 need." (2)
- "No one can honestly condemn Christian education."
- "No criticism of religious education except as sometimes interpreted."
- "Am 100% in favor of religious education."
- "Indispensable, -- but methods can be improved."
- "Believe in it deeply, but leaders must remember that Christ must enter life before you can develop Christian personality."
- "Should combine Christian education and evangelism."
- "Need more Bible study and evangelism."
- "Against the critical attitude of some who should be helping."
- "Against the rut our teachers have gotten into."
- "My concern is with basic assumptions: merely knowledge, or a new birth?"
- "Strong for some plan of transmitting the religious and cultural heritage we possess."
- "We are inadequately equipped for such a great task."
- "We need to discover more effective ways of developing Christian character."
- "Materials should be better." (3)
- "I criticize the failure to take advantage of available materials."
- "Denominational program is commendable."
- "The lack is on the field locally."
- "Need more time."
- "Less thought should be given the large church."
- "There is too much effort to professionalize religious education."
- "We must be interested in training schools, etc."

Question VI. WHAT PART SHOULD THE PASTOR HAVE IN THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF HIS CHURCH? IF YOU WERE TO RANK HIS DUTIES IN THE ORDER OF PRIORITY WHERE IN THE LIST WOULD YOU PLACE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION?

- 31 insist that he should have a leading part (many saying that he should not "dictate" or hold office but be the chief advisor.)
  - 3 say that if there is no Director of Religious Education the pastor should be the Director.
  - 15 say that you cannot separate religious education from evangelism and pastoral work (some saying that you cannot "rank" a pastor's duties.)
  - 5 say that religious education is the very core of everything (or that it should permeate the entire program.)
  - 19 say that religious education is his first job.
  - 20 say that it is his second job (worship or preaching or evangelism coming first.)
  - 5 say that if there is no Director of Religious Education this is second in importance for the pastor.
  - 11 say that religious education comes third for the pastor (preceded by preaching and pastoral work.)
  - 1 places religious education fourth (first, being a Christian; second, being a man; third, being a pulpit man.)
- No one gave a less important place to religious education or suggested that the pastor should not have an important part in the religious education of his church.

Question VII. IF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM OF YOUR CHURCH IS NOT ACCOMPLISHING WHAT IT SHOULD ACHIEVE, WHAT ARE YOU, AS PASTOR, DOING THIS YEAR (OR WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE) TO CHANGE THE SITUATION?

- 8 failed to answer this question.
- 2 said they had no plans.
- 1 said "we are doing all we can."
- 1 indicated a more or less hopeless attitude.
- 26 stressed a training program (including teacher training classes.)
- 3 others mentioned helping Sunday school teachers in their work.
- 4 spoke of more emphasis on education (Christian education being one of the "musts".)
- 6 mentioned workers' conferences.
- 1 expects to secure a religious education leader.
- 5 speak of organizing adult classes.
- 7 are emphasizing the vacation church school.
- 2 mention weekday classes.
- 9 are working through the board of education or committee on religious education.
- 4 intend to give more attention to evangelism.
- 2 mention a pastor's instruction class.
- 1 speaks of young people's summer conferences.



- 1 will take each class (of junior and junior-high age) for six weeks, in turn, on the fundamentals of the faith.
- 4 will work more through the home.
- 1 speaks of a parent-teacher association.
- 3 mention better materials.
- 2 speak of using sermons for Christian education.

Other answers (each mentioned once) include: "a church forward program"; "church school nights"; "the cradle roll"; "pastors' institute"; "organization of youth council"; "following up absentees"; "a campaign of Bible reading"; "visualization helps"; "improving housing facilities"; "bringing children in the pastor's auto from a five mile radius"; "helping the congregation to enter fully into the educational program"; "training a younger leadership"; "recreation"; "coordinating church and church school activities more closely"; "working a bit harder."

Your committee does not claim that too much weight should be given to the replies of only about 100 ministers. We submit, however, that even so limited a study warrants at least these conclusions:

- (1) That, in general, the reaction of pastors to efforts in the field of religious education is favorable and sympathetic rather than critical and antagonistic.
- (2) That there is nothing new or startling in these replies but that they call attention to points that we have long been stressing.
- (3) That there would be value in a more comprehensive study of ministers' attitudes toward religious education.

# THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## IV

### THE CURRICULUM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Prepared by

THE COMMITTEE ON THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

And Presented to the

International Council of Religious Education  
203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois

1946 - 1947

Price 40¢



## PREFACE

This document is one of eight reports issued by the Committee on the Study of Christian Education to the International Council of Religious Education. The committee was established by Council action at the Annual Meeting in February, 1944, with Dr. Paul H. Vieth of the Yale University Divinity School as chairman, Dr. Nevin C. Harner, now President of Heidelberg College, as vice-chairman, and Dr. Gerald E. Knoff of the International Council staff as executive secretary.

The committee interpreted its task as that of presenting its final reports as independent findings, addressed to the Council rather than as reports which necessarily had to have Council approval. The Council found itself in complete agreement with this understanding and took specific action to that effect at the Annual Meeting of 1945.

Some of these reports were presented to the Council at the February 1946 Annual Meeting; others were presented in 1947. All of the documents have been presented to the International Council though they are not to be interpreted necessarily as the findings of the Council.

Some of the recommendations have been formally adopted by Council action; others have been received for study and later action, as will be shown in the minutes of the International Council for the Annual Meetings of 1946 and 1947.

The substance of the eight reports together with other interpretive material has been incorporated in more popular form in the book, The Church and Christian Education, by Paul H. Vieth, published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis, for the Cooperative Publishing Association. The price is \$2.50. This book is suitable for use by lay people, by volunteer church workers, and for classroom work, as well as by professional groups.



The titles in this series of Study Committee documents are as follows:

I	Christian Education, Yesterday and Today . . . . .	.25
II	Theological and Educational Foundations . . . . .	.40
III	The Local Church Program . . . . .	.55
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VI	Leadership . . . . .	.55
VII	The Community Approach to Christian Education . . . . .	.40
VIII	The Structure and Functions of Agencies of Christian Education . . . .	.35

Price of complete set of eight \$2.75

They may be purchased through the Business Department of the International Council of Religious Education, 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois, at the prices indicated.

It is the hope of the Committee on the Study of Christian Education that these reports may be helpful in stimulating a critical re-examination of our programs of religious education in order that we may be more skillful leaders of those committed to our charge and better teachers of the Gospel.

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## THE CURRICULUM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The word "curriculum" can be used in a broader or in a narrower sense. In its more inclusive meaning it signifies the whole range of experiences formative in the life of an individual, including not only those transpiring within conventional class sessions but a great deal more--the temper and life of the home, the church's expression of the redemptive power of Jesus Christ, the life of the environing community with all its tributary institutions, and every last significant contact which the individual makes from birth to death. In a more limited sense it refers only to those experiences arising in the activity of a school, including the use of prepared materials (books, quarterlies, pictures and the like), or even to the materials themselves.

The broader meaning of the term dare never be forgotten. Indeed, if the "curriculum" has sometimes failed to produce the results expected of it, one undoubted reason is the failure of the local church to look beyond printed materials and formal sessions to these other experiences, and take them sufficiently into account. But for practical purposes the present consideration is limited principally to the narrower sense of the word. Our concern is with the materials prepared for the use of the various agencies of Christian education. We are deeply anxious to see what they are like, to project a picture of what they should be, and to encourage the production of materials which will make for vital rather than mechanical teaching in so far as this can be done through materials.

It is now almost a century and a quarter since the Sunday school began to reckon seriously with the curricular problem. During that time a bewildering variety of materials has been put forward for the program of Christian education in its several parts and agencies. These have gradually crystallized into some major types, which may be listed as follows:

- (1) Uniform Lessons. These materials, designed for and used in the Sunday school almost exclusively, provide essentially the same lesson on any given Sunday for children, youth, and adults alike. There is of course diversity of treatment and even of emphasis from one age to another, but the same Biblical passage, be it large or small, serves as the starting point for all alike. In this sense, they are uniform.
- (2) Group graded lessons. These materials, also intended primarily for the Sunday school, group the pupils into departments with a typical age-span of three years. (They are often called departmental graded, or cycle graded.) On any given Sunday all the pupils of one department, such as the primary which covers ages six, seven, and eight, have the same lesson.



- (3) Closely graded lessons. Here the principle of gradation is carried one step farther, and a separate course of lessons is provided for each year as in the case of the public school curriculum. These materials too are designed primarily for the Sunday school.
- (4) Elective courses. Some denominations offer a considerable number of separate study units, which may be elected at will by a group in Sunday school or elsewhere. Each one undertakes to cover one definite field of study, and is aimed at one age-group. They appear either in pamphlet or in book form.
- (5) Vacation school texts. These materials are usually in book form, are provided for the teacher alone, and follow the departmental principle.
- (6) Weeday school texts. These too are typically in book form; are provided in some cases for the teacher alone, and in others for both teachers and pupils; and cover an age-span of two to three years.
- (7) Youth fellowship or society tonics. The materials offered under this heading are difficult to describe or classify. Many are released weekly in youth magazines. At the opposite extreme, some assume the form of a book or manual containing program suggestions for an entire year.

The foregoing enumeration is by no means complete. It makes no mention of the curricular offerings for men's and women's groups in the church, or pastors' classes, or missionary organizations, or the guidance of religious growth in the home. It does attempt to set down the chief types of materials which have been developed within the Christian education movement and program in the past, and are being used in the present.

## I. THE PRESENT CURRICULAR SITUATION IN PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS

We turn now from mere definition and classification to a more important and difficult task--namely, that of taking stock. What is the present curricular situation within American Protestantism? What can be said concerning the materials which are offered and used? What is actually being said about them? Wherein is the whole picture satisfactory? Wherein unsatisfactory? As we attempt to answer these questions and others like them, a number of observations begin to take shape. Some of these are on the side of assets; others are on the side of liabilities.

## 1. Improvements in Curricular Materials

The most obvious feature of present day curricular materials for Christian education is their outer form, and the marked improvements which the years have brought in this respect. The paper used is on the whole of good quality. The pictures and cuts are well selected and well printed. The type is pleasing to the eye and of a size suited to the age of the reader. The cover is as durable and attractive as financial considerations will allow. In all these matters we still have a long way to go before we come abreast of current public school textbooks, but we have already come quite a distance--as a very cursory examination of quarterlies and catechisms published fifty or a hundred years ago will quickly demonstrate.

A like improvement of substantial degree has been made at the point of adaptation of material to the age of the learner. The language used nowadays comes much closer to the idiom of childhood, youth, or adulthood, as the case may be. The verbal and pictorial illustrations also come much closer home.

On a deeper level still, a like improvement is to be noted at the point of the relevancy of curricular materials to the ongoing lives of the learners. It is not only that the type and the language style are better suited than formerly to the age in question, but more fundamentally the lesson topic and its unfolding. In other words, by gradual stages we have become increasingly sensitized to the actual daily life situations in which boys and girls, men and women find themselves, and have slanted our curricular materials toward the places where they truly live. This attempt at adaptation is perhaps best shown in the degree to which graded outlines are employed among the various denominations. A study made in 1945 under the auspices of the International Council of Religious Education finds 14 out of 28 denominations publishing at least some materials based upon International Council graded outlines--Cycle Graded and/or Closely Graded. This figure does not include those issuing materials based on graded outlines prepared outside the International Council.\* One student of the matter found a considerable qualitative step forward in this respect around the year 1935. The basis of this judgment was a comparative analysis of the Group Graded Primary Lesson Outlines of the International Council over a period of several years. At this time there was a noticeable change in the direction of the daily experiences of the primary child.\*\* The reason undoubtedly is that

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\*The Curriculum Guide for the Local Church, p. 89. International Council of Religious Education, 1945.

\*\*Breshears, Ethel J., The Influence of Recent Curriculum Trends Upon Group Graded Lessons, M.A. thesis at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, 1936.

the years immediately before this date witnessed a sharpening of curriculum theory in accordance with modern psychological and educational insights, and the issuance of several significant publications in this field.

Another observation in which we can well rejoice is the very real degree of cooperation among denominations in the preparation of curricular outlines, and to a lesser degree in the publication of the materials themselves. The aforementioned study, made in 1945 under the auspices of the International Council, finds all 28 denominations surveyed making some use of outlines prepared cooperatively through the International Council--Closely Graded, Cycle Graded, or Uniform.\* In addition, many denominations cooperate in two's, three's, or four's in the preparation of outlines and materials.

## 2. Remaining Curricular Problems

A disquieting aspect of the current curricular situation is the fact of a considerable leaning toward Uniform Lessons, even with children's groups. In 1945 20 out of the 28 denominations studied still found it desirable to prepare primary materials on the basis of the Uniform outlines of the International Council; 21 did the same with junior materials.\*\* These proportions have not changed materially in recent years. Some five or six years earlier the Committee on Lesson Policy and Production of the International Council discovered 22 out of 33 denominations issuing primary materials based on the Uniform outlines, and 26 out of 33 doing the same for juniors. At this same time 17 denominational publishing houses reported that Uniform materials accounted for 6% of their total circulation at the primary level, 96% at the young people level, and 60% in all. The inevitable question arises: Why this marked and persistent tendency toward the Uniform Lessons? A number of answers were turned up in 1939-1940 during the course of the curricular study conducted by the International Council:

- (1) Churches like the idea of Uniform study throughout the Sunday school.
- (2) The promise of the Uniform lessons to cover the Bible periodically leaves the impression they are more Biblical than some other types.
- (3) Uniform materials have followed a familiar type of lesson treatment, and thus seem simpler.

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\* The Curriculum Guide for the Local Church, p. 89.

\*\* The Curriculum Guide for the Local Church, p. 89.



- (4) Leadership training has not been successful in keeping the consciousness of teachers abreast with ongoing curricular developments. As a result, the real objectives of a host of teachers in the field are closer to the objectives of the Uniform lessons than to those of the Graded lessons.
- (5) Uniform lessons are less expensive.
- (6) Uniform lessons are easier to administer, especially in a one-room school.
- (7) The names "International" and "Uniform" contain a certain time-honored appeal.\*
- (8) The lesson titles of the Uniform Lessons are more Biblical.

Whether this be a complete list of the reasons actually in operation or not, any honest survey of the curricular scene in American Protestantism must report the fact of a continuing preference in many quarters for Uniform lessons.

Another fact to be reported is that the curriculum situation in current Protestantism is chaotic to a surprising extent, reflecting no doubt the individualism which characterizes Protestantism as a whole. All that is required for this realization is a hasty glance at a chart, such as that on page 89 of The Curriculum Guide for the Local Church, outlining the types of materials prepared by a number of denominations for the several age-groups. Despite all that has been done in the way of joint study and effort, there are still materials, many, and apparently many conceptions of what the curriculum ought to be. We have here what may be called a centrifugal tendency, away from interdenominational cooperation and unity. But these differences exist not only among denominations; they are to be found also within any given communion. Churches bearing the same name and existing side by side may use entirely different sets of materials, and represent radically different expectations of a lesson series.

Perhaps it is saying the same thing to point out that Protestantism is obviously confused at the point of curricular theory. There has been no adequate resolution, for example, of the basic issue of the life-centered principle versus the material-centered principle. Neither has won the field against the other as yet, nor have the two been caught up satisfactorily in a higher synthesis. That such is the case is clearly indicated by the fact that the same set of lessons will be criticized in one quarter as being too Biblical, and in another as not being Biblical enough; by some as being too experiential, and by others as not being

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\* The term "international" is now applied also to Cycle Graded and Closely Graded Lessons.

experiential enough. So long as this is so, there is bound to be diversity and confusion both among denominations and within denominations.

At some risk of overdrawing this picture of curricular diversity, the whole matter must be approached from yet another angle. There is frequently no clear organic relation and correlation among the materials designed for the several agencies of Christian education--Sunday church school, weekday church school, vacation church school, youth societies or fellowships, and the like. A historical explanation can be found, of course, for this situation. Each of these agencies originated separately to meet the needs of the moment, and the curriculum of each has been developed more or less independently of the others rather than as a part of a long-range integrated plan.

### 3. Problems in Using Materials

To turn from the materials themselves to the manner of their use, it is common knowledge that prepared curricula are quite generally used in a conventional and stereotyped manner, many steps removed from the project principle with its implication that a study enterprise should develop out of the warm life of a vigorous local group. All too many leaders "teach" the quarterly, instead of using it as an aid in the teaching of living, growing persons. They read portions of it aloud or have the class members read it, or they use it slavishly as the basis of lecture or discussion without adequate "tailoring" to the needs of their own particular groups. Those who prepared it doubtless hoped that it would become a guide and spur to a creative experience which would take on the individual coloration of each situation in which it would be used. Instead it becomes an end-in-itself, an obstacle to creativity. This situation may well be the fault of the leaders rather than of the materials in many instances, although both must probably bear a share of responsibility.

### 4. Expressed Criticisms

Perhaps as the net outcome of the difficulties thus far listed and others which might be added, a considerable measure of dissatisfaction with existing materials is manifest among those who use them in the field. It may be true, as is sometimes suggested, that the curriculum is made a convenient scapegoat whenever anything anywhere goes wrong. The real locus of the trouble may be the leader, or the local church, or the general decline in Sunday school attendance; but the curriculum gets the blame. Nevertheless, the following criticisms are frequently heard:

- (1) The curriculum is too sterile.
- (2) Materials lack inspiration and religious warmth.

- (3) Lesson materials cannot be used in opening exercises or in the home.
- (4) The style and approach are too technical.
- (5) The materials call for teaching methods with which many leaders are unfamiliar, such as the technique of group discussion.
- (6) The curriculum makes demands which are over-heavy for the teachers available in the average church.
- (7) The Bible text is not printed in the quarterly.
- (8) Changes in subject matter are too abrupt, and there is insufficient continuity in the handling of the Bible.
- (9) Some life areas (boy-girl relationships constitute one example) have often been handled unskillfully, artificially, childishly.
- (10) Lesson writers prepare materials with the members of their own fraternity in mind, rather than the common people who must use the materials.
- (11) Graded lessons are complicated to order.
- (12) The price is high.
- (13) The instructions to teachers and parents for the handling of the Biblical background are not sufficiently explicit.
- (14) The materials look unfamiliar, not like the Uniform lessons on which the teachers themselves were reared.
- (15) Some units are too long for the knowledge and teaching ability of the leader.

Because of this known dissatisfaction in the field, there is a genuine concern among denominational executives over the tendency of many schools to use materials other than those offered by their own denominations. It cannot be denied that there is some justification for this anxiety; and yet the Publishers' Section of the International Council compiled some reassuring data in 1943 for six denominations (Church of the Nazarene, United Brethren in Christ, Disciples of Christ, Free Methodist Church of North America, United Church of Canada, and Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.): The total Sunday school enrollment for these denominations in 1943 was 3,404,923; the total average attendance was 2,074,352; and the orders for lesson materials totalled 2,477,476.



## 5. New Emphases in Protestantism

This survey of the curricular situation would be far from complete without the observation that recent years have seen the emergence within American Protestantism of certain emphases which contain decided implications for curricular theory and practice. One of the most important for our present consideration is the new stress upon the Bible, which began in European circles, and made itself felt in due time on this side of the Atlantic. What meaning does it hold for the curriculum of Christian education? Closely coupled with it is a renewed appreciation of our Christian heritage in general--not merely the Book, but also the biographies of the past, the symbols, the music, the art, and all the treasures of our Christian past. What is the meaning of this for the curriculum? The church itself as a divine-human institution has been the focus of much attention in Protestant thought and life during the past decade. Will the curriculum of Christian education be changed accordingly? Should it be? The ecumenical spirit and movement is upon us in full swing. What effect should it have upon the curriculum? Either the force of cold statistics or else a quickened Christian conscience has helped us to recapture our passion for evangelism. How should it make its way into the curriculum? Coming out of a day when many said it made little difference what a person believed so long as he lived aright, we have begun to emphasize anew the essentials of Christian doctrine. Should the curriculum be altered to keep pace with this shift of emphasis also? As a matter of fact, these changes in mood and temper have already found some expression at least in curricular terms. A comparative study which several members of the International Council staff made of the Uniform lesson outlines shows that in 1942-1944 there were 33 lesson titles doctrinal in nature, while in 1945-1947 there are 43.

## 6. The Home

Finally, there is one agency of Christian nurture for which there is as yet a strange dearth of materials--namely, the home. There are of course books for parents, and manuals for parents' classes, and some devotional materials designed for family use. But only the barest beginning has been made at what might be called a home curriculum of Christian education. The very idea of such a thing is a comparative newcomer. Because this area is so largely undeveloped at present, it constitutes one of the most promising fields for curricular advance in the future.

## II. A PROPER THEORY FOR A CURRICULUM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Obviously the first step in projecting an adequate curriculum of Christian education for Protestantism in the days to come lies in the formulation of a satisfactory theory of the curriculum. The undertaking is beset by countless difficulties and pitfalls, but it must be attempted with courage and vision.

The crucial question upon which all else depends is easy to state--namely, what shall be the organizing principle of the curriculum? Shall it be the Bible? Or the ongoing experience of the individual learner? Or the life of the intimate group of which the individual is a part, the home, the class, the society? Or the Christian community, the church, viewed as a dynamic social entity? Or the redemptive activity of God in Christ? Or the major doctrines of the Christian faith? Or the well-being of a community, a nation, a world? Or some other?

Each of these answers has actually been given by individuals or groups of individuals, and each has much to commend it. A logical, orderly, progressive, and self-consistent curriculum could be built around any one of these as an organizing principle. The problem would be so easy to solve if a single answer, simply given, would suffice. But on further thought a simple and unqualified "yes" to any of these queries begins to appear dangerous and one-sided. By its very incompleteness it opens the way in each case for some evil. If we answer "the Bible", we run the risk of Bibliolatry and remoteness from present day living. If we say "the church," we need to be on guard against falling into ecclesiasticism. If we select "the major doctrines of the Christian faith," we may be on our way to an arid, fruitless intellectualism. If we say merely "the individual learner," we are in grave danger of trying to educate him in a vacuum, cut off from the rich heritage of the past and the enriching contacts of the present. There is no simple answer to so complex a question.

### 1. The Organizing Principle

The purpose of the curriculum of Christian education is to confront individuals with the eternal gospel, and to nurture within them a life of faith, hope, and love in keeping with the gospel. The organizing principle of the curriculum from the viewpoint of the Christian gospel is to be found in the changing needs and experiences of the individual as these include his relation to (1) God as revealed in Jesus Christ; (2) his fellow men and human society; (3) his place in the work of the world; (4) the Christian fellowship, the church; (5) the continuous process of history viewed as a carrier of the divine purpose and revealer of the moral law; (6) the universe in all its wonder and complexity. Several facts stand out concerning this statement when it is subjected to close examination.

- (1) It turns the spotlight of attention upon the individual with his changing needs and experiences, and thus conserves the insights which we have associated with such phrases as "experience-centered," "life-centered," and "person-centered." These insights are precious. They have been bought with a price. We have arrived at them slowly, painfully, and recently; and we cannot give them up lightly. They are too rich with meaning for the curriculum, and the entire process of Christian education.

- (2) It does not view the curriculum as centering in "raw" experience--experience for its own sake, neutral in quality, going nowhere in particular. Rather it pictures the curriculum as taking shape around experience which stands in definitely Christian relations and moves in a definitely Christian direction. To say the same thing differently, it puts at the center of the curriculum not the individual per se, but the individual viewed as a Christian disciple. To say it once more, it sees at the center of the curriculum an individual learner not in splendid isolation, but in vital relation to the great realities of the Christian faith and life--God, Jesus, fellow man, the Bible, the church, the world. The term "person-centered" is thus given a turn which does not thrust these great realities out toward the periphery of the curriculum, but brings them in close to the person whose education and salvation is our great concern.
- (3) In such a conception of the curriculum the Bible and other parts of the Christian heritage are regarded as the record of God's self-revelation to mankind and of man's response to this revelation. They are utilized as sources for an understanding of God's great redemptive purpose; as resources in meeting present-day problems; as a critique of present practices; and as an enrichment of current experience.
- (4) In practical terms, this statement suggests that the curriculum would not be organized solely on the level of current experience nor on the level solely of content. Some parts of the curriculum would be organized around ongoing life experiences, with much use of helpful content. Other parts would explore step by step some body of content, with constant relevancy to ongoing life experiences. In any series of related units one of these would be the organizing principle and the other contributory, in order to insure continuity and integration. The following diagram embodies the essence of this conception:

EXPERIENCE \_\_\_\_\_



CONTENT \_\_\_\_\_

It is impossible, of course, to make such a diagram represent graphically everything that ought to be represented. How often, for example, should the curriculum line shift from one pole to the other, and how long should it stay in either position? (The answer probably varies from younger to older, from time to time, from place to place, from leader to leader, and from one group to another.) Only



The basic conception can be caught up in this graphic fashion, and that only suggested or hinted at.

The question inevitably arises: would a curriculum so conceived and pictured be necessarily and inescapably Christian? In order to safeguard this point beyond any peradventure of doubt, a definite and definitely Christian master-motif must run through all units of whatever sort. This may well be in Dr. John Mackay's phrase, "God's redemptive purpose in Christ to men." It is not contemplated that these words should be reiterated constantly and tediously, nor that the ideas they stand for should be dragged in artificially on each page of a quarterly--not this at all! Rather this master-motif would be in the background of consciousness constantly for all who plan and all who prepare lesson materials. From them it would find its way subtly into each unit, giving it a distinctive coloration, a characteristic turn, and orienting it along with all the others toward "the one divine event toward which the whole curriculum moves." (The substitution of the word "curriculum" within this familiar quotation disturbs the meter, but leaves a meaning which is true and seriously to be reckoned with.) Furthermore, this motif must not only be written into printed materials, but must inform and infuse the life of the local church, the Christian community which is the necessary context and condition of all Christian education worthy of the name.

The further question arises: would such a curriculum have unity, continuity, and cumulative movement toward the high purpose of Christian education? In order to insure a measure of success in this regard, there may be real advantage in arranging adjacent units into what might be called "constellations," which will be cumulative in their movement toward a single objective despite differences in the nature and content of the several units. For example, a grouping of junior high units on the meaning of church membership, the history of the Christian church, the Book of Acts, the missions of the denomination in question, and the Christian answer to the racial problem might all be so handled as to have the net effect of heightening the learners' apprehension of the church as a timeless and boundless fellowship. The accomplishment of such a purpose might require that a single writer prepare the materials for an entire year, in order to avoid spottiness and disjointedness. It certainly would require that the materials for the teacher help him to maintain a large perspective, in which the contribution of each part to the whole would be clearly seen and pursued.

The acceptance of such a theory of the curriculum as has been herein outlined does not provide the answer to all conceivable practical questions by any means. These are many and difficult, and sometimes the smaller they are the harder they prove to solve. However, a theory of this sort--in so far as it proves workable, and educationally and religiously sound--does provide a starting point, a basic conception, a guide for blocking out the curriculum, and a norm for evaluating it after it is prepared.

### III. THE BASIC NEEDS WHICH MUST BE MET

The curriculum of Christian education is servant, not master. It exists to minister, not to be ministered unto. It rests under a profound obligation to answer every honest and legitimate demand made upon it from whatever quarter. Of course it cannot presume to cover the entire field of education. It is a curriculum of Christian education, not of education in general. It must inquire constantly what is being done well by other agencies, and what its own peculiar genius and function require of it. But within the proper scope of its own functions, it must be responsive to every need addressed to it from every source; and it should be as sensitive as a seismograph to register the changes which occur in these needs from time to time and from place to place.

The first and most insistent call made upon the curriculum of Christian education is to be true to the basic content of the Christian faith and life. This does not change, although our apprehension of it changes and grows from age to age. Another section of this report on "The Study of Christian Education" contains a thoughtful and warm statement of the essentials of the Christian faith. Every portion, every unit of the Christian education curriculum should reflect such a statement as this, and be true to it. We have to do here with one of the "constants" of the curriculum, which is to be presupposed beneath and behind everything else we say concerning the curriculum.

Beyond this "constant," and conditioning the way in which it will actually be worked out in any given unit, are a host of variable needs and demands.

#### 1. On the Part of Individuals

If the curricular theory enunciated earlier is at all sound, persons are our primary concern--not persons in splendid isolation, but persons in vital relation to what has been and what now is. But boys and girls, men and women find life changing about them in ways that alter greatly the problem of present day living, and frequently place their immortal souls in peril. Hence in every age they look to the curriculum to mediate the Christian faith to them in changing accents suited to their current needs and perplexities. As we survey the post-war world, we can identify the following needs of individuals as among those deserving major attention:

- (1) The need for comfort and a sense of security. Surely this point requires no argument. Even in America which has been mercifully spared the worst ravages of war, there are still thousands, young and old, who have been bereaved; other thousands who have been grossly disillusioned; and yet others who have been uprooted by the war until they feel that they have no sure abiding place. In the great Christian affirmations there is comfort for bereavement and

hope in times of chaos; in the humble dependency upon the moving Spirit of God there is salvation from disillusionment; in communion with God and the ministry of the Christian church there is security and fellowship. Now is the time for the curriculum to speak a word of assurance and salvation to distraught souls with all the ways at its command.

- (2) The need for some clear moral guidance on specific issues of conduct. Again there would seem to be little necessity for laboring the point. War itself tends to become the very negation of all moral values. When life itself is held so lightly, why should people bother overmuch with the niceties and refinements of morality? Furthermore, our western civilization has for some years fallen under the spell of a widespread relativism, in which all absolutes have been abandoned wholesale. We have gradually been growing away from the mood of settling issues by a neat, "Thus saith the Lord." Instead we have weighed, analyzed, examined, and finally decided--sometimes. A thing might be right for one person but not for another; right here but not there; right now but not then. The result has been not only moral confusion, but moral laxity and indifference. The curriculum must seek to afford clear moral guidance amidst this uncertainty.
- (3) The need for a transcendence of inter-race, inter-class, international hatreds. We shall come back to this same matter later under the head of the social order, but we view it now from the standpoint of individuals. Our world is split so many ways by so many cleavages and animosities that the individual himself suffers. He is shut off from his fellows who differ from him. He is consumed with hatred and bitterness. He is something less than he should be, and could be. Consequently, he needs a curriculum which, among other things, will do something to tear down these ugly "middle walls of partition." Closely allied is the need for an understanding and experience of true democracy. We have seen and are seeing democracy threatened, denied, maligned, and frequently unknown. Believing that democracy which aims ultimately at the development of the individual into mature social responsibility is an expression of the Christian faith, our curriculum must endeavor to interpret it and employ its methods in actual practice.
- (4) The need for a sure understanding of basic Christian verities. The reasons underlying this need are four in number. In the first place, there is widespread spiritual illiteracy--there is no other name for it. Countless people, young and old, in the United States and Canada do not know the classic formulations of Christian doctrine which have emerged in the course of Christian history; they do not know what they believe. Secondly, there is a



great deal of ideological confusion within Protestantism, among and within denominations. The individual who honestly endeavors to listen and learn, hears conflicting voices. Thirdly, the whole structure of Christian thought has recently been under strong fire from rival ideologies, such as atheistic communism and nationalistic facism. It had been a long time in the West since the blatant denials of Christianity were put forward in the name of strong nations, but it has happened in our day. Fourthly, people need now as never before to lay hold upon the Christian verities, because life itself in this atomic age is so uncertain. A fundamental task of the Christian church is to help people to know what they believe.

- (5) The need for worthwhile, wholesome activities and some high overarching cause. Many have lost their grip on normal life through translation from civilian life into a military regime and back into civilian life again. If the customary economic cycle follows its usual round, the day is not far distant when many will be plunged into a sense of futility by unemployment. All in all, there is and will continue to be a great need for the opportunity to put to the test the Christian axiom that one finds his life by losing it in something worthwhile. This too the curriculum must meet at every age level.
- (6) The need for a sense of community. Sociologists affirm that one chief reason for the appeal of Nazism was its offer of community, the sense of belonging. For our day is plagued by an excessive individualism. Urban life is notoriously impersonal in its quality. The primary social groupings of family and neighborhood are weakening slowly but surely. Individuals right and left are being cheated of their birthright, which is to be "members one of another." This is one of the most difficult demands to be laid upon the curriculum, a set of prepared materials; but it dare not be passed by.
- (7) The need for vital, corporate membership in the Christian community, the church. In the thought of many, the meeting of this need is a prerequisite to the fulfilling of all the others. For in the church we have a society within society, a grouping with its own standards of membership, patterns of life, and heritage from the past. Once the individual can find a sure rootage for his life within this fellowship, he is well on the way to the meeting of some of these other needs. For example, he is now in a position to find some sense of comfort and security, both sociological and theological. Similarly, this particular grouping cuts across--to some degree at least--the lines dividing races, classes, and nations, and enables him in his own consciousness to transcend these cruel divisions. And so on all around the circle of these post-war individual needs. This is a heavy

order for the curriculum, but one to be faced all the more resolutely just because it is so hard and so fundamental.

## 2. On the Part of the Home

Conceivably a treatise on the curriculum of Christian education could have been written twenty-five years ago with scarcely so much as a passing nod in the direction of the home; but not so today! For two facts have thrust themselves upon the attention of Christian educators during recent years with startling clarity.

The one is that the home, the basic institution of American life, is gravely imperiled. This is not the place for a minute examination of the details of the picture, but the hard fact remains. The American home is losing ground in point of space; it is trying to exist in fewer rooms, smaller rooms, a lesser number of square feet than formerly. The home is losing ground in point of time: its members spend a larger number of hours, both at work and play, outside the home than formerly. It is losing ground in point of functions; it does less for its members, young and old, than it used to, and these functions are correspondingly taken by extra-home agencies and services. It is losing ground in point of its hold on its members; they care less for it and for what it professes than formerly. In short, the alarming and mounting divorce rate is merely a glaring index of a general decline of home life.

The other fact is that the home has been, is, and will continue to be in any foreseeable future more of an actual locus where the business of Christian nurture is carried on than most of our curricular practice has thus far recognized. For good or for ill, the home actually shapes life more than any other group or institution. If it succeeds and its net impact is conclusively Christian, the task of the church is immeasurably facilitated and simplified. If it fails on a large scale, nothing which the church can possibly do within its own walls will suffice to compensate for this failure.

Place these two facts side by side--and they are facts!--and the new concern on the part of Christian educators for the home becomes easily understandable.

Accordingly, the home looks to the Christian education curriculum of today and tomorrow for substantial help at two points, corresponding to the facts noted above:

- (1) Help in the maintenance of its own integrity as a fundamental social institution. The home has a right to expect within the materials designed for use in Sunday school, vacation church school, and the like a recurrent, sympathetic, and realistic treatment of home life from the Christian point of view, including a high emphasis upon fidelity to family responsibility; and realistic help in combating the disintegrating forces which threaten its life. Its children should receive therein a high appreciation of the home, and a

clarification of their own part in making a happy home. Its youth should receive all of this, plus specific help and counsel on boy-girl relationships, and the information and attitudes prerequisite to the establishment of their own homes. Its adults, the fathers and mothers who carry the major responsibility of home life, should receive not only inspiration to their high calling of parenthood, but also practical help for the task day by day. In other words, the people who attend our sessions of Christian education come not only as individuals, but also as members of homes. They need to be viewed in this latter capacity as well as the former, and our curricula shaped accordingly.

- (2) Help in the performance of its task of Christian nurture. This means, most obviously, a far more thorough provision of "home-work" suggestions in our curricular materials than we have ever known, in order that what is done at church may be supplemented and reinforced at home. But it means much more than this. The home is not a mere supplement to the church, or to anything else. It stands in its own right as an educator of the first rank, and deserves a Christian education curriculum of its own--suggestions for home study, for home worship, for home fellowship, for home religious activities, and for making the everyday life of the home consonant with religious ideals.

Such a curriculum will of course not be unrelated to the materials designed for use in the church, but part and parcel with them of a larger home-church or church-home curriculum more inclusive and more effective than anything we have yet dared to attempt. It is precisely along these lines that some of the most promising curricular developments of Christian education may take place in the years just ahead.

### 3. On the Part of the Church

As has been indicated earlier, the Christian church has come to a new awareness of itself during the past decade. It now possesses in heightened measure a consciousness of its own identity, its peculiar genius, its origin in the will and purpose of God, its glorious heritage through the ages, its essential oneness throughout the earth, and its distinctive mission in a changing world. The church, therefore, confronts curriculum builders with a definite array of demands and exceptions which must be honestly met, else it will feel cheated and thwarted in the house of its friends. Fundamentally, the church asks help in arousing its membership fully to the teaching task of the church and guiding them in accomplishing it. Beyond this the following specific needs remain to be met:



- (1) A new emphasis upon ecumenicity. There is no difficulty in envisioning the practical outworking of this emphasis within curricular materials interdenominationally prepared, and designed for use in interdenominational situations such as cooperative vacation and weekday schools. But even denominational materials, denominationally prepared and denominationally oriented, can bring into their purview a sympathetic treatment of sister communions, as well as a compelling vision of the church universal of which all denominations are a part and to which they are subject. The ultimate success of the ecumenical movement tomorrow depends largely upon what we write into our curricula today.
- (2) A new emphasis upon the church's heritage. Some years ago a study was conducted among four thousand boys and girls in grades four to nine throughout Episcopal Sunday schools of the United States. The investigator found these children inadequately informed concerning the life of the church, unprepared to use the resources of the church well, and imperfectly acquainted with the sacraments and symbols of the church.\* These results are all the more striking in that they come out of a communion which has long stressed churchmanship. The need, therefore, is great for a more adequate handling within our curriculum of the church's history, the church's great biographies, the church's symbolism, music, art, architecture, worship, and sacraments, and the church's manifold achievements in individual and social life.
- (3) A new emphasis upon evangelism. It is not easy to see precisely how the recaptured evangelistic passion of the church will be reflected in curricular materials. Several things, however, seem fairly clear. The materials can be so written as to confront each individual of whatever age with the eternal gospel in terms so dynamic and unmistakable as to call for a forthright decision. They can include also the type of study and activity units which will give every disciple some actual experience at being an evangelist. And, for the leader, they can offer recurrent suggestions of an inspirational and practical nature calculated to make him restless until he reaches everyone possible with the Christian message and for the Christian fellowship. There may be other ways to put evangelism into curricular forms, but these at least can serve as a starting point.

#### 4. On the Part of the Social Order

This survey of needs and demands would be far from complete without some outright attention to the Macedonian calls which come to us from the social order itself. It is ill, nigh unto death. The measure of its illness is the unspeakable horrors of World War II, plus the world-wide apprehension so suddenly engendered by the terrors of atomic power. It stands in dire need; and where should it turn if

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\*Edwards, Frances R. Children and the Church, Ph.D. thesis at Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1935.

not to the curriculum of Christian education? It therefore asks certain things of us with the urgency almost of desperation.

- (1) A realistic and factual interpretation of the actualities of present day society. There is so much misinformation abroad, and so much lack of understanding! We owe it to our pupils to give them cold, hard facts--as reliable as we can possibly make them, and to equip them with the readiness and the ability to supplement, evaluate, and interpret all sources of information. How many children of the nation have enough clothes? How many get to go to summer camp? Where can Negro children go swimming? What are the actual causes of war? What are the actual prospects for peace? What dare we expect from the United Nations Organization? What is the truth about Russia? How much do American laborers make per year? Is industry making excessive profits, or not? How many sharecroppers are there in the country? What are the facts about the Negro, his health, his education, his capacity for growth? Do the Jews control most of the newspapers of America? And so on through the gamut of social actualities! People cannot well project what should be, until they know what is.
- (2) A clear definition of the Christian goal for society, rooted in the eternal will of God. We commonly define this goal a little too glibly in the words "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all men." But what does this mean when brought down to earth? How much power ought labor unions to exercise in a fully Christian society? What place would there be for cooperatives? How much of a range should there be between the highest salary and the lowest wage? Should whites and Negroes live in segregation but with equal opportunity for all, or in complete social mutuality? One of our curricular obligations to the social order is to help our pupils define in concrete terms what it is we are working for and praying for.
- (3) A practical consideration of ways in which the Christian individual and the Christian group can actually take hold. Should a congregation as a congregation ever support a given political candidate? With what groups and organizations can a socially conscious individual with a Christian motivation align himself? What are the possibilities of individuals serving the social order through vocational groupings? What are the best ways of actually getting results within a local community? Any curriculum desirous of playing fair with the social order must deal with questions such as these. And, after it has dealt with them, it may well offer wise and tested and compelling suggestions for going beyond mere talking to actual doing in the following areas in particular:

- (a) Specific suggestions for study, worship, and action on the racial problem.
- (b) Specific suggestions for study, worship, and action on the economic problem.
- (c) Specific suggestions for study, worship, and action on the international problem.
- (d) Specific suggestions for study, worship, and action on social problems of a "moral" nature (using the word in its conventional sense). These four problem-areas have been lifted out for special attention, because of their urgency at the present moment. They constitute outstanding sores on the body politic. They need greatly to be healed, and the curriculum of Christian education is called upon to assist in the healing.

##### 5. On the Part of Those Who Use the Materials in Teaching

The expectations addressed to us from this quarter may seem trivial in comparison with the world-shaking demands of the social order. But from a practical standpoint, this may be the very point at which the greatest thought and improvement are indicated. For, no matter how adequate our materials may be in all other respects, they will amount to little unless they meet halfway the heterogeneous mass of persons--old and young, high and low, skilled and untrained, faithful and careless--who must actually put them into operation. If we assess correctly the cries that reach us from the field, the materials for teachers and leaders should move forward sharply and immediately in the following directions:

- (1) Very explicit instructions as to how to proceed in one, two, three order in the wise employment of a half hour or an hour as the case may be. These instructions must be simple, self-explanatory, unmistakable, fool-proof, and so reasonable as to appeal to the average non-professional leader.
- (2) At the same time such suggestions must be flexible, offering alternatives here and there within which the leader may find inspiration and guidance for adapting the lesson to his own peculiar class and situation. It is not easy to combine this injunction with the previous one. Nevertheless, the attempt must be made, for the simple reason that the same curriculum will be used here by an unskilled leader, and there by one possessed of greater resourcefulness. Perhaps the solution lies in offering a set, clear, simple teaching procedure as a base, and then supplying additional and alternative suggestions for those equipped to go the second mile.



- (3) Further, leaders need explicit guidance in the techniques of adapting every experience-centered lesson to a particular local situation. No unit on race relations, for example, can be drafted with Boston and Atlanta equally in mind. The leader's guide must say "If your situation is thus, do thus and so. If it is otherwise, do this." There is some ground for believing that the secret of the failure of the experience-centered curriculum and method to take hold more rapidly in the field lies right at this point. A unit centering in experience must of necessity vary more in its treatment from place to place than a factual and appreciative study, for example, of Isaiah. But this places a responsibility on the average teacher which he may not know how to discharge. Hence we must help him as much as we can.
- (4) Such a presentation of background materials--the Bible, church history, and the like--as will be scholarly, interesting, vital, and satisfying to heart as well as mind. The past must be made to come alive. This is not easy to achieve through the printed page, but it must be done. Every now and then there arises a Biblical scholar or a church historian with the necessary dramatic sense to make characters and events of the past rise up and move before us in a living procession. Generally such persons are found to have an unusual combination of scholarship, imagination, and humor. It is precisely this combination, plus sound educational training, which is needed for the preparation of curricular materials.
- (5) Fool-proof and non-technical guidance within the newer realms of methodology, such as the discussion technique and the project method. We scarcely realize how strange these appear to many teachers, reared under a different system. Therefore, our suggestions can scarcely be made too explicit or too full at the present stage of the game. "This is the way to start . . . . This is what may have to be done next . . . . After this happens, go on from there in this direction."
- (6) Practical hints for focusing the leader's attention on the living persons whom he teaches. Many a teacher has the material-centered frame of mind, rather than the person-centered. Therefore, he must be shown the things to observe in his pupils individually and as a group: feasible ways of observing, simple records or case study schemes, illustrative clues as to the use to be made of all this in actual teaching, and ways and means of directing individual growth through personal guidance.

- (7) Adequate but limited and feasible lists of carefully chosen resource books, pictures, magazines, visual aids, and the like. Too formidable a list may serve only to appal or aggravate the average leader. The references chosen should be non-technical, interesting to read, and comparatively few in number. Perhaps some correlation could be effected among writers for different age groups and successive units in the same age group, so that the same Bible dictionary or the same life of Christ would appear at these different points. This would facilitate the building up of a usable workers' library in the local church.
- (8) Ever so often something of inspiration to the leader. The purpose of such paragraphs and quotations is not primarily to tell him how to do a thing, but to set him on fire to attempt it. They should minister to his own spiritual growth, sharpen his sense of mission, and motivate him in his own self training. If the leader can be thoroughly aroused to the need and possibility of his own self-improvement, many of these other matters will care for themselves.
- (9) The foregoing suggestions have had in mind primarily the leader of a church group. But parents are leaders too, and to the degree that we move in the direction of a conjoint home-church curriculum; we shall be under the necessity of providing materials for parents also. They are in need of help at many of the same points as church leaders. In addition they need assistance at other points--how to handle such and such a family problem when it arises, how to extract the spiritual values inherent in a birthday, and the like. When the term "leaders" is expanded to include parents, a whole new field of leader materials opens out before us, inviting us to enter and explore.

#### IV. CURRICULAR PROVISION FOR THE RESPECTIVE AGENCIES OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We come now to one of the most troublesome issues of all. What allocation of curricular responsibility is wisest among the numerous agencies of Christian education, all of them involved in the same task but under such widely differing circumstances? And what type of curriculum is best suited to the peculiar situation of each one?

To begin with, these agencies differ among themselves in the following important respects:

- (1) Degree of leader domination. For example, the average adult Sunday school class is quite different in this respect from the average youth fellowship. Perhaps it should not be, but it is.

- (2) Length of session. Many a Sunday school class has only twenty minutes for "the teaching of the lesson." The typical vacation church school session is three hours long or nearly so.
- (3) Interim between sessions. This ranges from less than one day for the vacation church school, to a week for the Sunday school and weekday school, and two weeks or a month in some youth fellowships.
- (4) Time of week. Certain types of activities are deemed proper for vacation school or weekday school which would not be suitable for Sunday school in many communities.
- (5) Time of year. The warm months of summer are preoccupied by the vacation school; weekday school, and frequently Sunday school and youth fellowship, are limited to autumn, winter, and spring.
- (6) Place of meeting. The gamut here is a wide one--church sanctuary in some cases, church school rooms in others, public school rooms, club rooms, and ordinary homes in still others.
- (7) Calibre of leadership available. Many weekday schools set teacher standards above those professed by most Sunday schools. At the opposite extreme, some youth fellowships are set adrift with scarcely any leadership at all.
- (8) Tradition and general psychological expectations. The Sunday school has become somewhat typed in many areas as an agency of fellowship, and evangelism. Despite our best intentions to make of it a true school, we cannot do otherwise than begin with it where it is. The weekday church school, on the other hand, partakes more of the classroom tradition because of its proximity to the public school set-up.
- (9) Sponsorship. The Sunday school is almost invariably under the aegis of a single denomination. Some other educational agencies are often interdenominational, or non-denominational.
- (10) Informality. Any prospective program for the home, for example, must contemplate a much more informal setting and atmosphere than is generally associated with education.

All of these variables contain unmistakable implications for the curriculum.

The situation is further complicated immensely by the infinite variety of combinations of these various agencies discoverable in various situations. Some Sunday schools exist alongside of youth fellowships, vacation schools, and the like, and can well assign part of the educational burden to them. Even so, many children who attend



Sunday school do not come to vacation school, and many youth who are at Sunday school in the morning fail to put an appearance at the Sunday evening meeting of the youth fellowship. In other cases the Sunday school must perform the task alone; and indeed there are thousands of children whose only religious instruction is received through a vacation or weekday school. Furthermore, many pupils come to the doors of the church from homes marked by an intense religious atmosphere and training, while many others-- probably the great majority-- come from homes of a radically different sort. And yet it hardly seems practicable to prepare one curriculum for Sunday schools that are reinforced by much help at other points, and another for schools without such help.

These are some of the considerations which plague the curriculum builders for the future. To certain of the questions which they raise, there are no adequate answers. Without working out the implications in detail, we may venture to suggest the major directions in which curricula for the several agencies of Christian education may do well to move.

### 1. The Sunday Church School

The first fact to be considered here is that the Sunday school reaches far more people than any other agency of Christian education--ten times as many as its nearest rival, the vacation church school. (If the public school were ever to comprehend religion within its curriculum in some definite fashion, this statement could no longer stand.) The Sunday school may not do its work so well as some others, but it still has a chance at more people by far than any of its colleagues. This fact would seem to suggest that the Sunday school should have provided for it a base curriculum, comprising the essentials of the Christian faith and life, with other curricula offering additional material of real but supplementary significance.

In point of substance, the Sunday school curriculum should run considerably to definite Biblical, historical, doctrinal, and ethical content. It probably should not go further in these respects than it does at present--indeed, it might not go so far as it often does now, or at least with so little relevancy to present day living--but it should go further than the curricula of certain other agencies. It must do this partly because it is traditionally expected to do so, and partly because it is the base curriculum of all. In the nature of the case it should make large place for the particular doctrines, genius, history, and program of the denomination which it represents.

In point of method, until present limitations of time and equipment are overcome, the Sunday school curriculum may perforce have to make considerable room for a maximum of talking (whether lecture, discussion or story telling), and a minimum of "activity." This is scarcely our ideal, and we should be unremitting in our efforts to train leaders for the most effective modes of teaching; but the fact still remains that many present teachers are lost in anything but talking, and must teach in the same room with a number of other classes.

Again because teachers are what they are, the linguistic style and organizational plan of the Sunday school curriculum must be kept simple. And, because the Sunday school is what it is, there must be a large emphasis upon fellowship and inspiration. With many young people, the youth fellowship, of course, specializes in meeting these various needs; but the Sunday school as a whole has become more or less typed after this fashion, and a type changes only slowly and painfully.

## 2. The Vacation Church School

In point of its substance, this curriculum might well capitalize upon the religious values of nature in summertime. It is true, as someone has said, that the nature of God is not fully revealed in nature; but some of it is, and many there be who do not perceive it. Another obvious orientation for this curriculum is in the direction of community needs, and the cultivation of constructive Christian citizenship. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the content of the vacation church school curriculum, for it can and should take up many of the same areas dealt with in Sunday school, pursuing them further and with a different approach.

In point of method, the vacation school is ideally suited for projects which require for their completion hours of time following upon one another with a large measure of continuity, plenty of space indoors and out, and the freedom of the weekday to saw, hammer, sew, paint, dramatize, visit, and play.

## 3. The Weekday Church School

The set-up here is ideally suited to teaching along inter-race, inter-faith, and interdenominational lines. There are tantalizing possibilities also of close correlation with the public school curriculum, building upon the studies currently pursued there in geography, history, civics, and the like, and even coming to grips with the moral and religious issues present in the everyday life of the public school. Furthermore, because the teaching of the Bible is done so inadequately elsewhere at the moment, the weekday church school may have to carry a fair share of this responsibility. This too is not an exhaustive list, but merely a hint of certain distinctive possibilities.

As to method, the weekday school curriculum, because of the relatively high calibre of the teachers who administer it, can go farther than some others in the suggestion of resource materials, discussions, projects, the workbook technique, and hard though interesting examinations.

## 4. The Youth Fellowship

Because it meets on Sunday evening typically or a weekday evening, and because there is an interval between meetings of a week or more, the curriculum of the youth fellowship must conform to a certain general pattern. It should not, for instance, indulge as a rule in long units of content material, leaving that for some other agency. Correspondingly, it should give major attention to the current life needs of youth in the fields of personal problems, ethics, social issues, and religious perplexities. Considerable variety should mark the program suggestions, with now a talk, now a worship

service rich in symbolism, now a discussion, a drama, or a project of service or social reconstruction.

Furthermore, the curriculum should not ignore the increasing tendency in many churches to expand the fellowship program into many activities during the week, utilizing to the fullest the opportunities for Christian nurture found in wholesome recreational activities, special study groups, community work projects, projects of Christian service, intimate prayer fellowships (sometimes called "prayer cells"), informational excursions to discover the facts about community life, definite action to attain social, economic and political justice, and cooperation on an interdenominational basis with other Christian youth in the community, to express the unity of Christian fellowship and to achieve the widest goals of the church in its ministry to youth.

### 5. The Home

At the present moment the Christian education forces of the land are at the point of sensing a desperate need to recapture the centrality of the home in Christian nurture, but not knowing as yet precisely what this means or how to accomplish it. The thinking of many is running towards a church-home, or a home-church curriculum, in which the home will be expected to play a substantial rather than an incidental part in Christian education, and curricula will be provided accordingly. The difficulties are obvious. How many parents will measure up to their parental responsibility? If we confront a problem of great magnitude in the untrained Sunday school teacher, we face one considerably greater when we contemplate every parent in the role of a leader or teacher. The parents are so much more numerous, and for the most part so inadequately trained! But, whatever the difficulties, the need is overpowering, and we must do the best we can.

A significant example of how we may have to take hold of the matter is supplied by the experience of the Winnetka Congregational Church.\* During the year 1943-1944 information about the plans and objectives of the church's program was relayed to the parents of all the children in the educational program of the church, about four hundred families in all. Half of these parents joined with the church school teaching staff in conferences. Suggestions were given for home study on the part of parents, together with bibliographies for parents fitted to the ages of their children.

When we try to picture what the home-segment of a total Christian education curriculum would look like, such possibilities as the following come to mind:

- (1) "Homework" for children and youth, related to what is being done in the church school, with a clear appeal to parents for their cooperation and practical clues as to how they may give it.

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\*Fallaw, Wesner, Church-Family Religious Education in Winnetka. Teachers College, Columbia University. 1944.



- (2) Considerable help on family worship, comprising actual materials and services, as well as guidance to parents in formulating plans for family devotions of their own devising.
- (3) Practical suggestions for realizing the spiritual values inherent in birthdays, homecomings, anniversaries, great days of the church year, national holidays, the planting of a garden, the lighting of a fire in the fireplace, etc.
- (4) Lists of materials for good home reading--some for parents, some for children, some for the whole family together.
- (5) Similar lists of pictures for the home, or the prints themselves, together with suitable interpretations and teaching suggestions.
- (6) Guidance in the use of music in the home to the ends of Christian education.
- (7) Occasional bulletins on radio programs, motion pictures, and special community events, calling attention to their significance for the religious life of the home. (These materials would doubtless have to be prepared locally.)
- (8) Resource materials and guidance for home fellowship, including games, crafts, hobbies, picnics, trips, and the like.
- (9) Help to parents in their age old task of child rearing and home building, covering the accepted findings of child psychology and home economics, and offering specific suggestions for the meeting of the most typical and recurrent situations.
- (10) Help to parents in discerning the religious implications of everyday life--the way they drive their cars, the way they treat their servants, their attitude toward the black market, etc. It is worthy of mention that parents in order to utilize to the full educational opportunities of this sort need first in many cases to acquire a new conception of learning as being something other than mere memorization of facts or verses.

Such a list is entirely tentative. Much experimentation is called for before we shall know what we can do and ought to do in this regard. Meanwhile, the questions are legion. Shall families be graded as individuals are? Shall there be one curriculum for the bride and groom, another for the home with children, yet another for the home with adolescents, and so on? How can parents be induced to take their task of Christian nurture seriously? The parents who are already good parents will be most likely to undertake this responsibility faithfully; those who are now failing will be least likely to respond. What will

the home portion of the Christian education curriculum look like? Will it appear in the form of quarterlies, or books, or bulletins, or a magazine? A great new step extends before us, if we have the vision and the courage to take it.

## 6. The Public School

Much is already being done within the public school curriculum and program to promote the goals of Christian education, especially on the ethical side. But much remains to be done. We can scarcely hope to stem the progressive secularization of our American culture so long as religion itself rests under a partial taboo within this most significant institution.

Various proposals are being put forward for the teaching of religion in the public school. One of the most feasible of these contemplates the handling of religion not primarily as an intellectual structure (this could be done only with great difficulty in a society as heterogeneous as ours), but rather as a social phenomenon. What religion has actually done and is actually doing--this, it would seem, can be taught objectively and impartially without serious threat to the principle of the separation of church and state. In history courses, the role of religion can be presented as a motivating force alongside of economics and all the other pressures which have influenced people and altered historical events. In literature, religious allusions and religious influences can be dealt with as fully as any other. In civics, the church as an institution can be described and evaluated on the same terms as other community institutions.

In the opinion of competent observers, there is nothing in American tradition or law to prevent such a procedure. It will require, of course, considerable discussion and clarification in state and national educational bodies, some rewriting of textbooks, and some revision of the curriculum and approach in our teachers' colleges. But it is abundantly worth trying, and may mean as much in the long run as any improvements we can possibly effect in our own church-centered curriculum of Christian education.

## 7. Audio-Visual Aids

We come now to an aspect of the total curriculum which cuts across all agencies of Christian nurture, and is assuming such a measure of importance as to deserve a separate word of its own. The report of the Committee on the Family gives some attention to the question of the maximum use of the radio. It is our purpose here merely to suggest certain of the possibilities inherent in other auditory and visual aids.

Only the barest beginning has been made in the church use of recordings, either on the familiar records or by the new sensitized wire technique. Anthems, solos, orchestra or organ renditions of the great classics of religious music, readings by talented artists of Scripture passages and other devotional materials, the music of other

peoples, and dramatic sketches can be brought to the smallest church in this fashion. Libraries of recordings can be built up--either in individual churches with frequent exchanges, or by a group of churches working in cooperation.

In the same way visual aids will doubtless witness a tremendous expansion in the near future. The film strip and slide projectors are priced within the reach of any congregation. Sound motion picture projectors may have to be purchased in some cases by the churches within a neighborhood, or by a group of contiguous churches within the same denomination. In this way the price difficulty can be circumvented. The rental of motion picture films and the purchase of film strips and slides, can be shared in the same manner. It will then be the task of the curriculum builders to incorporate a limited number of such aids within their week-by-week suggestions, relating them intimately to what precedes and what follows in each case.

The uses of such aids range all the way from sheer recreation, through study, to worship itself. It is perhaps too early to speculate as to the possible effect of these new teaching devices upon buildings and upon the whole scheme of gradation within our church schools. Certainly new educational plants will contain roomsequipped for daytime showing of slides and films. And we may find ourselves working with larger groups than formerly, covering a somewhat wider age range, when these aids are employed. At all events, World War II has driven home to us forcefully the educational potency of audio-visual aids, and we have no alternative but to utilize them to the maximum.

#### 8. Miscellaneous

Nothing has been said thus far about the curriculum of 4-H Clubs, Scout troops, Hi-Y organizations, and the like. The final determination of the program for each of these character building agencies rests in each case with the appropriate national body. However, there is a growing realization of the necessity for correlating these programs as much as possible with the program of the church proper. Perhaps the best way of effecting this is a system of "interlocking directorates" with the same individuals serving in several capacities and linking the various units together closely.

As for the "clubs" which consist of church school groups meeting on a weekday night, it would seem that the curriculum builders of Protestantism have a responsibility to include from time to time some detailed guidance for the leaders of such weekday activities.

#### V. PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

It would be a serious mistake to assume that little has been done or is being done toward the curricular goals thus far outlined. For many years devoted educators have been working steadily at the task within the International Council of Religious Education and the denominations of the land. Within recent times a fresh study has been made of the Uniform Lessons, Graded Lessons, and proper guidance for



those churches equipped to shape their own curricula; but in order to move farther in the directions suggested by the preceding discussion we may now bring together some practical proposals:

- (1) The development of a new type of home curriculum, really one segment of a unitary church-home curriculum.
- (2) Serious consideration of new types of format which shall be attractive, varied, and on a par with public school texts. The cloth-bound volumes projected by certain denominations are straws in the wind at this point.
- (3) Serious attention to the maximum degree of joint curricular production among the denominations, especially for weekday school and vacation school, but also for certain general units for the youth fellowship, Sunday school, and the home. A new venture such as the curriculum for the home might provide an ideal opportunity for collaboration of this sort. The present duplication of time, energy, and money is appalling. Interdenominational cooperation may be one of the highroads to better curricular quality.
- (4) Retreats of a week or several weeks in length to train curriculum writers of the various denominations, true workshops in curriculum building.
- (5) Similar retreats of a more popular nature for those who use the curricula on the field, to get their reactions and to interpret to them what the curriculum builders are aiming to accomplish.
- (6) More consistent collaboration among theologians, Biblical scholars, and editors in the blocking out and preparation of curricula. The best curriculum requires the contributions of all these groups.
- (7) A more extensive and intensive field program for the purpose of carrying in person to the maximum number of schools and leaders a proper interpretation of the materials available and how to use them.
- (8) Consistent attention in the leadership education program to the necessity of training leaders who will appreciate the newer types of curriculum, see what they are driving at, and be competent in their use.
- (9) The adoption of a policy whereby curricula would not invariably be required to pay their own way, but would be subsidized if necessary. Many other improvements wait upon this one. Denominational journals often have to be subsidized; why not lesson materials?

- (10) Encouragement of an increasing number of schools to go on a basis somewhat like that of the public school--namely, an over-all course of study to serve as a norm, with tributary units which can within limits be elected with some freedom. The necessary materials will have to be published, convenient annotated lists prepared, and sufficient guidance offered to save a school from the vagaries of faddists.
- (11) Selection by denominational boards of a limited number of schools for experimental curriculum construction under guidance, with the purpose of sharing and evaluating experiences.
- (12) Close cooperation between boards of education and commissions on evangelism, social action, and the like, so that these several interests may find their way in due measure into the curriculum.
- (13) Assumption by boards of Christian education and theological seminaries of a real measure of responsibility for helping local churches to realize their inherent destiny as true Christian communities, members of the body of Christ, as an essential pre-condition for the effectiveness of any curriculum.
- (14) The development of citizenship units applicable to a specific local community.

# THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## V

### THE FAMILY

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Prepared by

THE COMMITTEE ON THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

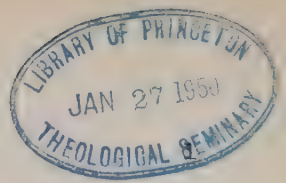
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## PREFACE

This document is one of eight reports issued by the Committee on the Study of Christian Education to the International Council of Religious Education. The committee was established by Council action at the Annual Meeting in February, 1944, with Dr. Paul H. Vieth of the Yale University Divinity School as chairman, Dr. Nevin C. Harner, now President of Heidelberg College, as vice-chairman, and Dr. Gerald E. Knoff of the International Council staff as executive secretary.

The committee interpreted its task as that of presenting its final reports as independent findings, addressed to the Council rather than as reports which necessarily had to have Council approval. The Council found itself in complete agreement with this understanding and took specific action to that effect at the Annual Meeting of 1945.

Some of these reports were presented to the Council at the February 1946 Annual Meeting; others were presented in 1947. All of the documents have been presented to the International Council though they are not to be interpreted necessarily as the findings of the Council.

Some of the recommendations have been formally adopted by Council action; others have been received for study and later action, as will be shown in the minutes of the International Council for the Annual Meetings of 1946 and 1947.

The substance of the eight reports together with other interpretive material has been incorporated in more popular form in the book, The Church and Christian Education, by Paul H. Vieth, published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis, for the Cooperative Publishing Association. The price is \$2.50. This book is suitable for use by lay people, by volunteer church workers, and for classroom work, as well as by professional groups.

The titles in this series of Study Committee documents are as follows:

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They may be purchased through the Business Department of the International Council of Religious Education, 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois, at the prices indicated.

It is the hope of the Committee on the Study of Christian Education that these reports may be helpful in stimulating a critical re-examination of our programs of religious education in order that we may be more skillful leaders of those committed to our charge and better teachers of the Gospel.

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## THE FAMILY

### 1. THE PRIMACY OF THE HOME

The family is primary in God's economy. It is the most potent influence in the development of personality. It may be the most effective means of Christian education. Nowhere else may religion be taught so easily and with such abiding results as in the home.

The basic concepts of the Christian faith may come alive with meaning when they are interpreted in terms of family life at its best. God as Creator and Redeemer may well be understood in terms of the personal relationships of the home: the father who understands and loves and with infinite patience guides his children. Our theological doctrines of freedom and grace may become meaningful realities when explained in the light of parental affection and responsibility. But if the home does not provide an ennobling and cooperative experience for children, how can they adequately understand the Christian idea of God as "Father"?

The ethical nature of the Christian gospel is often expressed in the analogy of family relationships. God is a Father of moral love; we are responsible children of God. Active good will and forgiving love characterize those who are Christians -- "members of the family of Christ". Our social objectives are stated in terms of an all-inclusive family. But how can children and young people know what is meant by the extension of this spirit and purpose to community and world relationships unless they have a satisfying experience of Christian fellowship in the home?

Whether we wish it or not, learning constantly takes place within the family circle. It never ceases. Naturally, easily, and effectively the thinking and living of old and young are being shaped by the daily events of home life. Ideas are fashioned, and the emotional quality of the family relationship transforms ideas into prejudices, ideals and purposes. The cumulative activities of this intimate social group determine lasting attitudes and habits.

The reality and quality of religion are constantly tested within the home. Concealment is difficult and often impossible. Life-changing influence is inevitable. Is the religion of adults a Sunday-morning-in-the-congregation event, or is it that which determines the daily decisions at home, at the office, in politics and industry? Is religion merely intellectual assent to words and phrases or is it an active force in the full round of human experience? Is religion something which is merely professed or is it lived?

Before the child can frame the question he knows the answer. Throughout childhood and adolescence a boy's character may be more easily affected by association with his parents and brothers and sisters than by any other factor. He imitates the habits of the members of his family or reacts against the example set him. In either case, he is learning from the life about him. He grows strong against the forces of evil, within and without, or he is denied that spiritual vigor necessary in a world of temptation and tension.

The home existed before the school. It antedated the Christian church. Among the Hebrew people it was a primary means of transmitting the culture of a people, a culture which was essentially religious. The school and the church, in our modern civilization play a larger role than in earlier times, and their functions are not to be minimized. But they are supplementary or complementary. The home is still the first teacher in point of time. It is still the most influential teacher but its teaching is too seldom definitely and effectively Christian. Whether we think in terms of recruiting strength for the church of tomorrow, of rearing a generation of young Christians, or of achieving a brotherly world -- our hope and despair root in the home.

Some within the current movement of Christian education would hold that the home is the basic religious unit as it is the primary social unit, and that the church is a fellowship of individuals and families. Others would insist that the church is the basic religious unit and that certain aspects of its life are cultivated and expressed in families. Still others might place the emphasis upon the individual's relationship to God, and would regard the church and the home as two areas in which this personal relationship is shared with others. But all would agree that the home and church are two of the primary social units through which God's will may be understood and realized. All would agree that education takes place in both and that this education should be definitely Christian. The primacy of the home and church is central in the Christian view of life. Any adequate program of Christian education, therefore, will be a comprehensive one, in which the home and church are two important agencies of Christian nurture.

## II. THE HOME AND THE CHURCH SCHOOL

The home has virtually abdicated as a purposeful Christian teacher. Most if not all of the responsibility has been shifted to the church. The Sunday school was never intended to supersede the home as the teacher of religion. It began as a missionary or social agency with an educational purpose. At the outset it was for children who were denied the benefits of family or public school instruction. As its scope widened, its most loyal members came from church families. As time passed and it grew in influence Christian parents left more and more of religious instruction to the Sunday church school. Church people of our day do not rely upon their own spiritual resources as much as in other times; they have come to depend upon the printed aids supplied by denominational and other religious agencies. Quantities of such materials are available; prayer meeting suggestions, lessons for church school classes, guides for teachers in the church school, missionary and general religious literature. But there are few educational guides for the use of families in the home, families in which the needs of children are a paramount concern. And too few pastors and denominational officers seem to have recognized that the home is potentially the major teacher of religion.

It should be said that most parents probably try to teach their children their own conceptions of "right" and "wrong", and that large numbers of them earnestly endeavor to guide the young into "the good life". By wise and unwise methods parents seek to shield their boys and girls from wrongdoing and attempt to inculcate a high degree of moral responsibility. They support character-building agencies in the community. One of the reasons that so many send their children to the church school is that these



children may receive additional ethical guidance. But character education is one thing; Christian education is something more. It is at the point of purposeful Christian nurture that the modern home has been negligent.

Too much has been expected of the church school. Viewed from the limited perspective of Biblical, historical and theological information to be interpreted to the young is it reasonable to expect the church school to do an adequate job in an hour or less of instruction a week? Considered from the standpoint of developing an intelligent and active faith can it properly be expected that the Sunday program can succeed except as it buttresses the contagious religious influence of the child's parents? Surely, it is folly to think that even the best church school teaching alone will produce Christian character.

There are no sharper critics of the church school than the religious educators themselves. Some are seeking a solution in experimental substitutes, e.g., the junior church as the successor of the church school department. Others believe that hope lies in an added hour each week, either as an expansion of the Sunday session or in cooperation with the weekday public school. But something more fundamental and radical is required.

Christian parents must become the chief teachers of religion. The locale of Christian nurture should be in the kitchen and parlor and bedroom and on the playground as well as in the classroom. The national leaders of the churches need to awaken to the fact that a major responsibility is to furnish help in the development of Christian family life. To perpetuate and expand the church school is a secondary objective. To grow genuine Christians is our first purpose. When the home undertakes the work of religious education seriously, fathers and mothers will become convinced that there is a supplementary place for the church school. Then, too, the church school will be able to lay hold of mature Christian teachers who possess the skill which grows from experience in teaching religion in the home.

### III. THE IMPACT OF SECULAR CULTURE

The secular world impinges upon the church and home. The church has taken on too much the nature of the secular world. It needs to be pitted frankly against certain dominant forces of our social and industrial life. One of its functions is to be so uniquely and aggressively different that it will have a redemptive influence upon every aspect of society. When it is said that "the church" must do this, what is meant except that Christians, individually and collectively, shall reveal a different kind of life than is now characteristic of society? The problem of the religious education of the young roots in the lack of vital and intelligent adult religion. It may truly be said that a new era of family religion awaits the evangelization of adult Christians and of unchurched men and women.

Social life is always in process of change. These changes always influence the standards and practices of individuals, families, and the church. But in our day material changes have come so rapidly that our generation has felt the social impact more severely than in most periods of history. This is a transitional age, but to what is it a transition? Scientific progress accounts for much of the increase in the tempo of life, and it is agreed that this rapid change may not be true progress. Whether



the modifications in ethical ideas are largely results of this scientific change or whether they are largely due to the insipidity of twentieth century religion may be a matter for debate. At any rate, the family and the church face an intensity of social pressure which greatly complicates their work of Christian nurture.

In grandmother's day family life was a close-knit unity. A home included children of various ages and often two or three generation of adults. They lived, worked, planned, rejoiced and suffered together. Their home was their world. The economic problem was common to all members of the family and all labored to solve it. Through this labor the children learned valuable attitudes and habits -- attitudes and habits about which there was a degree of verbalization. The learning consisted of experience and interpretation. These attitudes and habits were part of the religion which was transmitted to the oncoming generation.

"Clothes began with sheep. When the sheep were those on the family farm hardly a child old enough to toddle was too young to help out in the first step of the progress of getting trousers on his legs and a coat on his back. If a baby lamb was ignored by a lack-witted ~~own~~ mother, it was given to a six-year-old boy to feed and bring up. Not because psychologists had told parents -- accurately and intelligently -- that it is 'good for children' to have the care of pet animals, but because the family needed the wool that the lamb when grown up would produce....

"As for the twelve-year-old boy sent out to give the flock their morning food and let them out from the barn into the right field, the responsibility put on him was not only actual but considerable. He was pulling his full weight in the family boat. Even more important than this, far more, was the fact that the work which he did was an apprenticeship to the work he would do in maturity....

"When the eighteen-year-old boy in an eighteenth century family put on a new pair of pants, he had earned them; not because it was good for his personality development, but because if he had not done his part of the work of producing them, there wouldn't have been any pants. In exactly the same way young people in the preindustrial period helped produce all that was needed, from soap to shoes, and hence learned how to produce. They acquired these necessary skills without leaving home. They were instructed by adults to whom they were personally known. And by the nature of the situation rather than by careful educational planning, the instruction given them was in graduated steps adapted by long experience to the capacities of each age group."\*

True, the close-knit family of past generations has been idealized. It produced <sup>was</sup> frustrations as well as deep personal satisfactions. It taught much which <sup>was</sup> inadequate, restrictive, untrue. It failed to provide many of the physical, mental and spiritual resources which people of all ages need in a rigorous and baffling world. Even if a return to the intimate fellowship, the self-sufficiency and the cooperative activity of pioneer homes were possible there is no guaranty that people would live more spiritually in this materialistic age. And such a return is indeed impossible. But we must seek some substitute for those former relationships which produced undeniable values, and it is necessary to discover ways by which wholesome

\* Fisher, Dorothy Canfield; Our Young Folks; pp. 20ff.; Harcourt, Brace; 1943.

companionship within the family circle can be restored and maintained on a spiritual basis.

This needs to be attempted even though present day conditions make it difficult for large sections of our population. The mobility of American families is, in part, accounted for by the facility with which people may travel great distances. It is an inevitable result, too, of our high-powered industrial organization, an aspect of economic insecurity. The war, of course, greatly accentuated the instability of family life. During the post-war period uprooted families must again move. Tens of thousands of newly married men and women live in temporary homes, often under cruel circumstances. The best of people cannot escape the tragic effects of these social experiences. Even those with religious yearnings and life-long habits of church attendance find it hard to maintain their self-respect, their faith, their loyalty to the church.

It is not easy today to try to picture or describe "the normal home". The extravagant mansion, the small single house, the crowded rooming house, the band-box apartment, the trailer and emergency housing unit, the remote farmhouse, the share-cropper's shack -- these and more are part of the picture. The church, then, faces the necessity of so adjusting its conception of its ministry that the rooted and the transient, the fortunate and the unfortunate are served at the points of greatest need and by methods and resources appropriate to these needs. Its gospel must not be proclaimed in a vacuum or directed to a "once-was era." Nor must it despair of creating a redemptive type of life within homes which are not even houses. It has a social mission which includes the effort to secure wholesome living conditions for all people. It has an evangelistic mission of bringing God into the family fellowship wherever that family may live. It has an educational mission which embraces both of these and which also includes guidance in the teaching of religion at home.

The average family of today is a small two-generation group. Much of the day of all of the members of the family except the mother and very small children is spent away from home. The work of a small house or apartment requires less of the time of any person than formerly. There is little group activity in the home, and much of what remains is of the sweeping and cooking and errand variety. Little common effort is put forth to produce the goods which are necessary for subsistence. Money has a new place in our economy and an exaggerated place in our thinking. Everyone wants more money to get more of the things that are supposed to enrich life. Children grow up more aware of the worth of money as means to ends than of the worth of the ends themselves. Young people must have money in order to keep up with the crowd. If they go to work early in order to get this money, their sense of values is colored by their employers or by the employees with whom they associate -- able teachers who are not conscious of what or how they teach. If they go to college, they may graduate with little sense of personal mission but with an avid desire to sit comfortably on top of the world.

The particular family belongs to one of the strata of a highly organized economic society. There is an all but universal desire to keep up with the Joneses or to climb above them. Beneath this ambition to rise



ever higher in the economic world is the feeling of insecurity. This is reflected in table conversation, in the edginess of after-work hours, in the nervous tempo of daily experience, and in the accentuated class consciousness which divides the community.

Accompanying the radical change which has taken place in the world of work has come a comparable shift in ideas and ideals. The stern Puritan sense of duty has gradually given way to excessive freedom and a lawlessness of mind. Young and old get around and observe what others do and tend to join the uninhibited minority which has grown into a throng. The world of never-was is dramatically portrayed on the screen and over the radio and is "realistically" described both in "good literature" and the lurid pulp magazines. This fictional world is accepted by many as the world which is and ought to be. Controlling loyalties which rooted in religion or social obligation or self-respect have weakened. Whether it concerns the observance of Sunday, the use of liquor, the relations between the sexes, the mutual responsibilities of members of a family, or attitudes toward one's fellow men there often seems to be little or no difference between the Christian and the non-professing person. Even church families, more than they realize, take their view of life more from Broadway, Hollywood, Wall Street and the omniscient commentators of press and radio than from the New Testament or the pulpit. The world is much with us -- the bread-and-butter-and-cake world and the world of speed and thrills, much more with us than the world of the gospel and the Kingdom of God.

The discoveries of science present grave dangers for the oncoming generations, but they offer the home innumerable assets for the work of Christian nurture. The great classics of music are as free as the sentimentalities of current crooners. Thoughtful sermons by able preachers may be heard in the most remote home. Intelligent discussions on horizon-broadening issues are freely offered to the entire nation by the broadcasting chains. The automobile may be a means of taking families on educational journeys, on sheer pleasure trips which help to knit the group into the fellowship of love and understanding, and on missions of service. Money may purchase treasures as well as tawdry trinkets, permanent possessions which give continuous satisfaction as well as momentary pleasures which yield only ephemeral thrills. In an unbounded world community the mutual meaning of neighborliness may be so experienced and expressed as to have significance for all of the future. The "one family" era may indeed become the "one world" epoch if the home and church will use well their common opportunity. But its coming depends upon the readiness of the home to develop a new awareness of its mission, both for its own members and for a civilization which teeters between extinction and rich fulfillment of its destiny.

#### IV. PRESENT POLICY AND PRACTICE

Christian education exists wherever Christian people seek to influence the lives of other persons by witnessing to and interpreting the Christian gospel. It is an organized effort or movement within local churches, among the several churches of countless communities, among the churches of the denominational fellowship of which the local church is a unit, and among the tens of thousands of Christian churches which in spite of their differences work together for common ends.



The International Council of Religious Education is the cooperative agency through which the Protestant religious education movement expresses itself on an inter-church and continental scale. It is this Council which has projected this Study of Christian Education. In examining the present philosophy, policy and program of Protestant religious education in America it is necessary to study the official pronouncements of the Council. Recommendations regarding modifications in the program of Christian education are properly addressed to the Council which authorized this study.

This section of the committee's report is an examination of the announced policy of the International Council of Religious Education concerning the place of the family in a program of Christian education, and a survey of the extent to which the expressed policy and the practice of the Council are consistent. This will be followed, in the final section of the report, with a recommendation regarding the future work of the Council.

The International Council of Religious Education has affirmed the basic importance of the home as an agency of Christian education. That affirmation seems to the Committee in the Study of Christian Education to be an excellent presentation of the point of view which this Committee holds. It therefore expressly supports the Council's announced policy as contained in the following representative excerpts from Christian Education Today.

"Christian education takes place through fellowship in Christian living and the sharing of Christian faith....

"As the primary and most intimate social group, the family is potentially the most important means of Christian education for all its members....The nature and function of the family give it distinct advantages in Christian education. It has the growing person first, and it has him for the largest amount of time during the years of greatest responsibility and modifiability. It brings to bear on him most effectively the education which comes from social participation and fellowship. It is in the most favorable position to make use of the learner's current interests and needs. It provides a constant living example of what it seeks to teach in Christian living....

"The church and the family should stand in relationship as co-workers in Christian education, each doing that which it can best do. At its best, the church school may well represent the combined efforts of the people of the church to provide Christian education which is in continuous relation with what is being done in the families of the church....

"In view of the important place of the family in any comprehensive plan for Christian education, the establishing and sustaining of Christian families will itself become one of the goals toward which the efforts of Christian education will be directed....

"Thus church and family serve and support each other, not chiefly from duty or even from choice, but because they have so much in common in their functions and destinies. It is not a question of the church calling upon the family to help put over the church's program. Nor is it a question of the family calling in the church to make up for its failures or to take over a

difficult part of its task. Rather it is a relationship of complete mutuality. The family finds its richest self-realization in the larger community of Christian families. Together they seek to develop each person to his fullest spiritual capacities, and to extend that love and community to encompass all mankind as children of one Father."\*

From these representative excerpts from the statement of basic philosophy of the International Council of Religious Education, it might be supposed that Christian nurture centers as much in Protestant homes as in Protestant churches, that the programs of the denominations are made effective in these two loci of Christian education. It would be natural to expect that if this were true the curriculum-making bodies would take into account what should happen in both places; that these bodies would produce outlines for materials to be used in the home as in the church; that the training processes would reach parents as often as they serve church school teachers; that denominational publishers would provide as rich a variety of printed materials for family use as for the church school; and that the field forces of the churches would be skilled and concerned to improve the work of religious education in the home as in the church. Moreover, since the wider mission of the church is so dependent upon the quality of family life it would seem that all of the central leadership of the denominations would join the educational specialists in seeking to lift the level of family life.

Christian Education Today is more a statement of what should be than of what is. It did not antedate the programs of the denominations and of the International Council of Religious Education, programs which had been developed almost entirely in terms of what goes on within the church. But it was certainly intended that such a statement of philosophy would affect the future policies of the denominations and of their interdenominational agency. It has influenced the work of some boards of education. Several denominations carry on conspicuously successful programs of Christian nurture in the home. Christian Education Today has made some difference in the activities of committees of the International Council. It is nevertheless true that relatively little has been done to bring the programs of Protestantism into line with the point of view announced in Christian Education Today. How much needs to be done is indicated by the following brief survey of the present situation.

Separately and cooperatively, through the International Council of Religious Education, the staffs of educational boards spend much time in producing outlines for church school curricula. To a small degree they also work on outlines for other agencies of the church (e.g., young people's societies and weekday church schools) but no comparable sequence has been developed for home use. It appears that most of the organized religious education is expected to take place within the church and in group activities directly sponsored by the church. Committees of the Council seem to proceed upon the assumption that the church school and its related church-sponsored agencies must provide a consecutive course of study which covers all of the essential information with which a person should become acquainted during the stages of his development, that the Sunday and weekday processes of the church itself must introduce him to most of the experiences necessary

\* Christian Education Today, International Council of Religious Education, 1940, pp. 13, 20ff.



for his Christian growth and expression. In response to educational standards of the public school, care has been taken to encourage such gradation as will make it possible for groups to learn together most easily and the curricula are so graded as to meet the interests, abilities and needs of the pupils. There is little recognition of the fact that some of the most profound religious and educational values are found within groups that include young and old.

The Council Committee on the Graded Series has charged a subcommittee with responsibility for preparing outlines which will enlist the home in the work of Christian education. This is a hopeful departure; it is a recognition of the home as a fellowship within which certain experiences are to be shared and certain objectives achieved. This subcommittee has projected outlines and prepared descriptions, with the hope that leaflets, pamphlets and booklets for family use may be produced. It seems likely that several church boards and publishers may issue a few such materials soon.

But the suggestions prepared by this subcommittee are hardly main-line curriculum. The Committee on the Graded Series gave its major attention to the curriculum of the church school. It was apparent to the subcommittee that dealt with the home that any materials which might be based upon outlines which it produced would have a limited use as long as the church continues to be the place where the work of Christian education is centered. What it now offers is a modest collection of useful outlines which are supplementary to the curriculum of the church school, and which were not prepared step-by-step as a coordinate part of a total home-and-church curriculum. It cannot be said that the Committee on the Graded Series has attempted to create a correlated curriculum, in the sense that it first determined the areas to be included and then allocated certain of these areas to the graded program of the church school and others to the ungraded fellowship of the family. For the most part, the suggestions for the home are still tangential, elective and incidental, although they are highly important and valuable.

Every denomination makes recommendations of curriculum materials to its constituency. Uniform, group or departmental graded, closely graded and elective materials are available to the churches. Vast sums are spent annually in producing these publications. Aggressive promotion is given to recommended courses. In some instances, the materials are so written that parents are encouraged to undertake certain activities which have religious values, but usually these activities are based on what is the main line of study: the in-the-church Sunday program. So far as the members of the Committee on the Study of Christian Education know, no denomination prepares a set of materials which begins with the smallest child in the family and follows on through adolescence and which is regarded as a necessary course, or series of experiences, for the families of that fellowship.

It is true that there are new devotional materials prepared for use in the home. They reach many people. This new venture was not begun by the educational forces of the churches, although at least one of the later series is developed by or in cooperation with the members of an educational staff. These booklets are decidedly limited in scope and effectiveness. Most of them are prepared on the adult level. They ignore



the fact that there are children in families or are content to try to lift the experience of children to the adult level. Their interest is in family worship and in contemplation of a Bible passage and a sermonette and in common prayer. They seldom encourage activities and group experiences through which persons learn -- that is, experiences through which the thinking and living of persons are assuredly changed or directed. Little guidance is offered to those who want to know how to engage in activities which have lasting educational results. For the most part, these publications contain a series of unrelated or loosely related topical programs; sequence, unity and planned educational progress are not apparent. Without underestimating the good which may come from the use of such devotional publications, it must be pointed out that a planned program of Christian education includes a variety of approaches and many additional types of experiences.

As funds become available, the educational boards add age group and other specialists to their staffs. Although these persons usually have a lively sense of the fact that persons learn in varied circumstances and settings, most of their efforts are directed toward improving the work within the church and through the enterprises which the church sponsors. It appears that few, if any, secretaries of children's work, for example, are expected to give as much time to the development of religious education in the home as to the work of the church school. The secretaries of adult work give some attention to education/family life but they would admit that this matter does not at present receive sufficient attention. Not many denominations have full-time secretaries whose major work is in the area of the home. Such a department could hardly function apart from the age group departments, but it could help constantly to focus the work of the entire staff upon the home as well as upon the church. If one were to compute the importance of education in the family, or education for family life, by the amount of money now spent by the boards in developing the home aspect of the religious program, the conclusion would be that the home is not of first importance in the thinking of religious educators.

Nor is much effort put forth to change the situation by training men and women for family life or of preparing older young people for marriage. The fact that only five courses dealing directly with the work of the home are listed in the second series leadership education curriculum is not a matter of moment. Many of its courses deal with the Bible, the church, and the understanding and guidance of children and young people and adults. These courses are as valuable for parents as for church school teachers. But when one examines the text-books written specifically for use in the standard courses, it is clear that most authors and editors have the church and church school only in mind. Little effort is made to interest as many parents as church school teachers in community or summer training schools. One cannot escape the conviction that the thinking of our educational staffs has not yet adjusted itself to the home-and-church approach affirmed in Christian Education Today.

This is not written in criticism of the International Council or its constituent bodies. It is too much to expect that historical points of view shall be changed overnight. It is significant that some of the constituent churches have made beginnings in the field of family education. It is encouraging, too, that certain of the city and state councils are providing guidance on a community-wide basis. The Committee on the Study of Christian Education, however, calls attention to the fact that time is precious. The children, young people, and men and women in families today

need all of the help that church leadership can provide. Plans are now in-the-making which affect the work of the International Council of Religious Education and its member agencies for at least four years into the future. The Committee respectfully suggests that now is the time when the Council should implement its excellent statement of philosophy.

#### V. RECOMMENDATION

It will be no easy task to revolutionize the thinking and practice of Protestantism so that the cultivation of family religion becomes a major concern of the entire church. The enlistment of millions of parents in an effort to provide sound Christian education for their children and to continue in a process of learning throughout all of the years of adulthood is an undertaking which will take all of the resources of national agencies, denominational and interdenominational. But it is doubtful whether any other effort will ultimately accomplish as much for young and old and for the Kingdom of God. It is difficult to see how Christians and Christian churches can evade this responsibility once they are aware of the potential results of a home-and-church plan of Christian education.

Because the International Council of Religious Education is the interdenominational agency, which the churches have brought into being, through which the Christian education movement expresses itself in the United States and Canada, the Committee addresses its one recommendation to this Council.

The single recommendation of this Committee is that the International Council of Religious Education examine its present and prospective program, its literature, and its structure to discover the degree to which home religion receives the attention which it deserves, and that it then revise its program, processes and structure so that the preeminence given to the family in CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TODAY is apparent in the full round of Council activities.

This would mean that education for family life would assume an equal place with education for church and church school leadership, and that resources for Christian education within the family would be as much the concern of the agencies of Christian education as resources for Sunday religious education.

It is not the function of this Committee to tell the officers of the Council how this shall be done, or to outline in detail what would be involved in such a change. It is proper, however, to suggest some of the points at which significant changes would be made.

It is not within the province of this Committee to make recommendations to the boards of Christian education represented in the Council. It is important, however, to point out that what the International Council of Religious Education and the areal councils of churches and of religious education can do depends largely upon what the boards of education of constituent churches want done. The Council program cannot be a home-and-church program unless the churches desire it, for most of the materials produced for the work of Christian education issue from denominational presses and the direct approach to local churches is primarily the responsibility of the boards of education. The extent to which the International Council of Religious Education can initiate prophetic departures from current purposes and patterns is determined by what the constituent boards are willing to do, separately and in cooperation. But these boards, through



their elected representatives, have given assent to the home-and-church approach by approving the philosophy enunciated in Christian Education Today.

The International Council, therefore, is on solid ground if it seeks to implement this point of view, and if it takes the lead in discovering ways which the untapped resources of the home may be employed in the work of Christian nurture. Indeed, it would seem that the Council has no alternative than to proceed upon a course which will lift its philosophy out of the pages of a booklet and put it at the heart of all of its endeavors.

At least such areas of the Council's work as the following would be affected if this recommendation were to be approved.

### 1. Program Emphases and Activities

Emphases for the coming quadrennium have been adopted. From preliminary announcements it appears that large attention is to be given to the family. Much intensive work will need to be done if the millions of Protestant families in the thousands of American communities are to be affected. General emphases will need to become specific in terms of what should and may happen in every home and church. Will a body of material be prepared for the use of parents who have become convinced that they must engage in a process of Christian nurture? If not, good intentions will be frustrated and another generation may grow up without benefit of family religion.

Something more is needed than National Missions, and the observance of Religious Education Week and National Family Week. These are means by which the conscience of adults may be touched and through which some insight regarding program and method may be gained. But the average parent lacks initiative and imagination and experience in teaching religion. He may develop into a good teacher if adequate printed resources are available as he begins to try to do what he knows he should do. It is as important to furnish him with helpful information as it is to distribute pupil's and teacher's material for the church school. The middle aged man and woman who have made no conscious effort to maintain a religious life in the home need guidance to help them begin and continue in a process of Christian growth. Will such aids be ready during the early years of the new quadrennial program? Will the plans for Religious Education Week be so carefully made that a new period home-and-church cooperation will begin in tens of thousands of churches? Will National Family Week be an unrelated event or will it soon be an important incident in a year-long experience of family religion within Protestant homes?

### 2. Curriculum

If this recommendation is adopted, the International Council of Religious Education, through its curriculum committees, would reexamine the present product and the work in process to determine the degree to which the home is recognized as an active partner with the church in the work of Christian education. The Council would probably instruct at least one of these committees to prepare a total curriculum which has two foci: the home and the church. The outlines for experiences in home and church would be



two parts of a total plan, worked out simultaneously and with the whole constantly in mind.

Realism would require that account be taken of things as they are. It takes time to overcome the indifference and lassitude of parents and the neglect of the home on the part of parish leadership. The programs, publications and field procedures of the boards of education cannot be radically changed overnight. Nevertheless, a beginning must be made if the churches are to fulfill their responsibilities to the present and oncoming generations. That beginning should not be long postponed. It ought to be a daring start, made in faith, and backed up by a promotional and guidance program which will bring results.

It would appear that the procedure within at least one of the committees of the International Council would be somewhat as follows. An inclusive statement would give a detailed prospectus of the information and experiences which are essential to any comprehensive curriculum of religious education, and of the types of activities by which persons of various ages learn most effectively. This is part of the pattern followed by certain curriculum committees. From this point on, the procedure would be new.

The committee would recognize that some of these experiences may more properly be phases of the in-the-church curriculum, and that others ought to be natural interests of the home. After such a two-fold division has been made, outlines for home use and outlines for church use would be prepared. The total process would be unified from the start, and at every step in its work the committee would seek to develop a comprehensive and correlated home-and-church curriculum.

It is conceded that serious problems would arise. Upon what basis should correlation take place? How much duplication is wise? Since there are such varied combinations of ages in homes, how could satisfactory plans be made for all of them? The discouraging fact of ill-prepared adult leadership is even more serious if a large part of Christian teaching is to center in homes. What is meant by a "curriculum for the home"? Would it be a formal series of courses to be used in the family much in the same way in which courses are used in the church? To what extent would the doctrinal and more factual elements of a curriculum be left to parental interpretation? How can consistency between the point of view of parents and church school leaders be achieved? Would the outlines, rather, propose a collection of suggestions for informal activities through which religious learning would take place -- (music, recreation, family festivals, projects of neighborliness)? Would much of the guidance be given by pastors as they visit in the homes, and would the national agencies be particularly concerned to develop resource materials for pastors? As in all pioneer enterprises, the answers to such questions could not be given with certainty without experimentation. Future committees would have learned much through the trial-and-error of local efforts. Much of what would be done during the first years would be tentative. But it appears that the International Council has within its membership a body of leadership which is capable of projecting a home-and-church curriculum which will be at least as effective in its total field of operation as the church school curriculum now is within its sphere.

### 3. Materials

The International Council of Religious Education has no authority to publish curriculum materials. Outlines without interesting and helpful materials are useless for most churches and homes. Committee members cannot afford to waste time in making outlines which will not be developed into published materials. Is there any likelihood that outlines for home use will interest editors and publishers? To date the subcommittee of the Committee on Graded Series has had no conspicuous success along this line. But is not the reticence of publishers accounted for by the fact that there seems to be little demand for the incidental but important booklets thus far proposed? If they had assurance that both halves of a home-and-church curriculum were to be promoted with equal vigor by the central and field forces of the denominations would not the publishers readily support the experiment? And might they not see in this area of family religion one of their great opportunities for cooperative publication?

The membership of the International Council includes the publishers of the constituent denominations. These men are as eager as other Christian leaders to further the processes of Christian education. Their purpose is to issue such booklets, books, and audio-visual materials as will be used by those who guide the process of Christian growth. It may be assumed that they would rise to the opportunity of intensifying the work of religious education as quickly as any other group of persons within the fellowship of the Council.

### 4. Age Group and Functional Committees

In certain of the age group and functional committees of the Council the home would need to have continuing consideration. This would certainly be true of the Committee on the Religious Education of Children, the Committee on the Religious Education of Youth, the Committee on the Religious Education of Adults, and the Committee on Leadership Education. The Committee on Visual Education and the committees that have to do with the radio work of the Council would have important contributions to make to the program of family education. It is possible that explicit redefinition of the scope and functions of some of these committees might be indicated. It may well be that the Council is inadequately staffed to undertake such an enlarged plan. These are matters which will find their solution once the thinking of the Council and the churches is centered more definitely upon the home.

### 5. Leadership and Adult Education

To aid fathers and mothers to become intelligent and skilful parents is a task of startling but thrilling magnitude. It is a phase of the Council's future work which deserves the best available leadership. Whether such a program would be directed by the Department of Leadership Education, the Department of Adult Work, or by a new Department of Family Life is a detail. Certainly no less ambitious guidance program should be contemplated than is now available to workers in the church school.

Books and booklets for personal study and for group discussion would be needed. An aggressive effort to maintain classes in parent education within the churches and on a community-wide basis would be supplemented by summer courses in training schools and institutes and by specialized conferences for parents. Pastors, parents, and other lay leaders would be helped to counsel young people contemplating marriage, particularly when these young people



belong to different churches. City, county, state, provincial and International Council conventions might again interest large numbers of lay men and women because their programs would offer help to adults and young people of every home. Religious education might, indeed, enlist the support of a larger part of the laity of the churches because it would concern itself with what is clearly the business of everyone instead of seeming to be a matter for the faithful few who maintain the traditional Sunday school.

## 6. The Unreached

Despite the recent emphasis on the need of reaching the unreached half of America, little progress has been made in the solution of this acute problem. Most graphs of church school attendance still show a downward trend. Not much effort has been made to go where people are. The church cannot rest content as long as so many people remain absent from the house of worship. It is possible, however, that more people would be interested in the church if the church seemed more interested in the homes. It is a fact that many families cannot attend church regularly or send their children to church school regularly, because of distance or because of conflict with other family obligations. Modest experiments are now in progress which seek to establish "church schools in the home" or neighborhood church schools. Marked success attends some of these efforts. They are indicative of what may be done upon a much wider scale.

Protestantism has only begun to explore the possibilities of audio-visual education. There are great opportunities for home education through the directed use of excellent picture and story books which issue from the religious and secular presses. The radio has entrance to homes which the church never touches. Religious radio programs, prepared with all of the dramatic and technical art which characterizes commercial programs can capture a large company of the listening public. Inspiration to better living, broadening of social horizons, deep inner commitment -- these are possible results of a single fifteen minute dramatization on the air.

But the churches should be concerned with something more than gaining a fleeting listening audience; they should use the radio and similar media as instruments of Christian education. A good sermon may make a deep impression; a good book may leave the reader with a desire to make more of his life; a powerful dramatization may move the hearer to resolute purpose. One moment of prayerful purpose -- and then what? Christian education is a process, it is more than a series of incidents and moments.

If the religious forces of America expect to use radio as a means of accomplishing some of the basic objectives of Christian education, the radio sequences will need to be as carefully planned as a series of units for the church school curriculum. This radio curriculum would be more than an interesting program to which the nation-wide audience listens; the real curriculum would be the experiences of members of a family in a home. The radio would be an auditory aid. Other aids would be supplied to many who listen; booklets for reading and study, and suggestions for activities which would be pertinent to the entire curriculum unit of which the four or twelve week radio serial would be one important part. It is something to reach the unreached, once a week or spasmodically by radio. Christian educators are interested in something more consecutive and inclusive and purposive than that.



# THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## VI

### LEADERSHIP

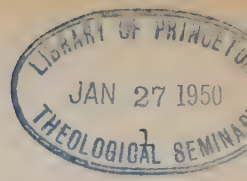
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THE COMMITTEE ON THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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## PREFACE

This document is one of eight reports issued by the Committee on the Study of Christian Education to the International Council of Religious Education. The committee was established by Council action at the Annual Meeting in February, 1944, with Dr. Paul H. Vieth of the Yale University Divinity School as chairman, Dr. Nevin C. Harner, now President of Heidelberg College, as vice-chairman, and Dr. Gerald E. Knoff of the International Council staff as executive secretary.

The committee interpreted its task as that of presenting its final reports as independent findings, addressed to the Council rather than as reports which necessarily had to have Council approval. The Council found itself in complete agreement with this understanding and took specific action to that effect at the Annual Meeting of 1945.

Some of these reports were presented to the Council at the February 1946 Annual Meeting; others were presented in 1947. All of the documents have been presented to the International Council though they are not to be interpreted necessarily as the findings of the Council.

Some of the recommendations have been formally adopted by Council action; others have been received for study and later action, as will be shown in the minutes of the International Council for the Annual Meetings of 1946 and 1947.

The substance of the eight reports together with other interpretive material has been incorporated in more popular form in the book, The Church and Christian Education, by Paul H. Vieth, published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis, for the Cooperative Publishing Association. The price is \$2.50. This book is suitable for use by lay people, by volunteer church workers, and for classroom work, as well as by professional groups.

The titles in this series of Study Committee documents are as follows:

I	Christian Education, Yesterday and Today . . . . .	.25
II	Theological and Educational Foundations . . . . .	.40
III	The Local Church Program . . . . .	.55
IV	The Curriculum of Christian Education . . . . .	.40
V	The Family . . . . .	.25
VI	Leadership . . . . .	.55
VII	The Community Approach to Christian Education . . . . .	.40
VIII	The Structure and Functions of Agencies of Christian Education . . .	.35

Price of complete set of eight \$2.75

They may be purchased through the Business Department of the International Council of Religious Education, 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois, at the prices indicated.

It is the hope of the Committee on the Study of Christian Education that these reports may be helpful in stimulating a critical re-examination of our programs of religious education in order that we may be more skillful leaders of those committed to our charge and better teachers of the Gospel.



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THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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## LEADERSHIP

Christian education has always been an integral part of the Christian movement. As organized today, however, Christian education is comparatively recent in the life of the Christian church. Leadership education is still more recent. The long and still firmly established tradition of lay leadership in the Protestant church has been predicated largely on the idea that almost any Christian who has the right sort of character and Christian purpose can teach religion. In America the separateness of the Sunday school, which has been and remains the central teaching agency in the average church, has tended to keep it an institution under lay leadership. The idea that lay teachers ought to be carefully trained for their work has spread rather slowly.

Over a century ago it was concern for better teaching that led to the development of lesson materials in which helps for the teachers were provided. Source materials were developed in the form of well-known systems of teachers' aids, some of them still in use. The first national Sunday school conventions, held in 1832 and 1833, were partly for promotion, partly for the inspiration and training of teachers. The popular county and state Sunday school conventions, famous for a century, sought to lift the level of teaching, particularly among laymen.

In 1903 the first secretary of Teacher Training was appointed and the first elementary standards approved. With the advent of Graded Lessons, the Graded Unions began to be organized throughout the country, chiefly in cities, and helped greatly to improve the work with children through the adaptation of materials to the needs and interests of children. But most of the early emphasis was on what to teach rather than on how to teach. Teaching was almost wholly content-centered. It is only within the last quarter century that attention has shifted to method. The First Standard Course in Teacher Training called for 50 lessons with at least 20 lessons on the Bible. A three-year training course was outlined in 1916-1917 and later adopted by the International Sunday School Association.

It is difficult to evaluate these efforts. That they have had tremendous results cannot be denied. Perhaps from the experimentation of these training programs has come the vast improvements in organization, in methods, and the rich variety of modern religious education. But when all possible credit is given it must also be admitted that training has been woefully inadequate to keep the teaching work of the church abreast of a rapidly changing world.

### I. THE PRESENT INTEREST IN LEADERSHIP EDUCATION

Throughout the church today interest in leadership education seems to be growing. There has grown not only upon leaders, but on an increasing number of the rank and file within the church, the realization that the church cannot fulfill its educational mission without better educational practice.

There are many reasons for this growing interest in leadership education. Perhaps the basic reason is the gradual change in the nature of the church's educational task, brought about by many factors in our modern life. The foremost factor in this change, perhaps, is the failure of the family to fulfill its teaching function. Then there is the increased secularization of the community. Again, the trend of public education, with an increased number of young people going to high school and college and with a great deal of emphasis upon science, has presented a challenge in the teaching of religion which was not always present.

Our richer and more highly organized way of life in the secular community has made the teaching of religion more difficult. In the complex living of today, transmitting a "way of life" is not as simple as it once was. It was comparatively simple to teach the fundamentals of a religious faith in a compact, homogeneous community where the majority of people accented common ideals and patterns.

Transmitting religion in the unstable community of today is much different from that of the "shared life" process of the homogeneous community of earlier times. Group patterns have become less tenacious. And on the world scene we have the remembrance of two world wars to show us how precarious has been our supposed world unity.

These and other factors have awakened the church to the insufficiency of its educational program, and have pointed consistently to the need of a more thoroughly trained leadership.

## II. THE NEED FOR EVALUATION

The limitations and failures in Christian education have almost all pointed to this question of leadership, not only in respect to ability and skills, but in respect to clarity of purpose, and actual achievement. However, it is only in the last twenty-five years that the Protestant church in America has made a widespread attempt to train its lay and ministerial leadership for its educational task.

Even during this period greatest concentration has been upon materials, methods and psychology in the training of children and youth. There has not been a comparable emphasis upon how adults learn and are motivated to teach. The Commission on Teacher Education of the American Council on Education says in one of its publications,

"Consideration of the needs of children and of the conditions and relationships that are necessary to their best development led naturally to a greater awareness of the similar needs and aspirations of teachers as persons. It became evident that the work and happiness of teachers is much influenced by the conditions under which they work and by the nature of the interpersonal relationships they experience in particular schools."\*

It appears that much of leadership education has been slightly off focus; that is, it has not fully understood the role of the leader and the educative process through which leadership is developed and made most fruitful.

\*Prall, C.E. and Cushman, C.F.; Teacher Education In Service; p. 306; American Council on Education; Washington, D.C.; 1954.



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The failure of the training program to reach effectively the vast majority of volunteer lay workers in the local church is cause for serious reflection.

Though it does not follow as cause and effect, the fact remains that during the period we have put the greatest emphasis upon the development of better curriculum materials and the training of leadership we have sustained our greatest losses in church school attendance. Whether, as some think, our efforts at training are at least partly responsible for other developments in the educational work of the church beyond the Sunday school, developments which show great promise, is not as yet fully determined.

One thing is certain. The training program has not reached effectively the majority of the workers, and this it must do if the church is to fulfill its educational mission.

For example, one rural life leader has this to say:

"It does not seem that many rural churches have a well conceived plan, or any plan whatever, for the development of the laity into effective leaders. When leadership development is mentioned most churchmen think that leadership training for religious education is meant. But most rural churches do not even participate in religious education training programs."

The same is true of urban churches.

Any critical appraisal of the leadership education program of the church points to the fact that the pastor is the key leader. From the educational point of view the functions and preparation of the minister for fulfilling that function is under more severe scrutiny today than perhaps at any other time in the history of Protestantism. Both from outside and from within the seminary comes a demand for the improvement of our whole program of preparation for the ministry with regard to the minister's function as a Christian educator. Of this problem we shall speak more at length later in this document.

There is also a great concern throughout the church today because of the insufficient numbers of professional trained workers to serve the church. The demand for directors of religious education in local churches, weekday Bible teachers, church social workers and other professionally trained personnel finds the supply very limited both in quantity and in quality. Here not only the training program is called in question, but the whole employment policy and practice present too little security and recognition within the life of the church for professional workers.

Part of the willingness to re-evaluate the training program today comes from the challenge given us by public education, especially that which has been broadly designated as progressive education. Here great strides have been taken in discovering how teaching ability is developed, what the nature of leadership is and how it is encouraged, and how people actually learn through their association in learning activities with those who are known as teachers and leaders.

The techniques of group work which have developed rapidly in the last few years have called in question many of our practices in Christian education and pointed ways to new types of leadership training. The rapid growth of adult education throughout America has focused attention upon the way in which all adults help to shape the life and thinking of children and youth, and has tended, therefore, to put the specific teaching function within quite a different setting from that of the traditional point of view. A rethinking of the training program is also stimulated by the development of new ways of education such as visual and audio education, group activities, and work experience, some of which has been stimulated in recent years by military training and training for civilian war services.

### III. LEADERSHIP EDUCATION ALWAYS GOING ON

There are many ways in which leadership education is going on at all times in the life of the church. There was always some leadership education in the administration of the church through its committees and other organizations and through all the group procedures by which the congregation lives and acts. Perhaps the most basic type of leadership education is always to be found where there is a living fellowship in which something is happening to persons. The sharing of religious life through the day-by-day living of the group is an educational process which is always going on and which produces naturally a type of leadership.

Wherever there is a genuine, productive fellowship and a certain amount of conscious or unconscious supervision or guidance in the ordered life of the group, leadership education is in process.

There is greatly renewed interest today throughout the church in what is known as in-service education. We speak of coaching on the job, of "guided experience," of "learning by doing," and the other ways through which leaders are being developed through serving. There is no doubt that there needs to be more careful study of how leadership is developed in this natural process. That is, what happens to leaders in the church as they are involved in various activities? How can this process be made more fruitful? There needs to be more careful observation of how leadership develops in the churches where there is good supervision, either through the work of the pastor or through a professional director of Christian education.

We speak often of "informal" and "formal" means of leadership education. In recent years there has been a tendency in some quarters to frown upon the formal ways of education and to promote what are known as informal methods of training. This has been, in part, a revolt against an academic, book-centered or content-centered type of leadership education which did not seem to carry over very fully into practice.

It would seem, however, that a false division has often been made between formal and informal methods. Where the most successful "formal" training has gone on, that is, making use of classroom settings, textbooks, requirements for study, etc., many of the techniques of the best "informal" methods have been utilized. Informal has come to mean varied

activities, working in a variety of situations, attacking the problems at hand from several different angles, use of a great range of resources, free discussion and wide group participation and so forth. Unfortunately, "informal" has also too often meant absence of all controls, haziness as to aims, and little measurement of results. "Informal" has also come to designate loosely the means of training other than the traditional class or school, and in this case suggests the type of situation rather than techniques.

#### IV. FORMAL TYPES OF LEADERSHIP EDUCATION

Under "formal" leadership education we commonly think of the Standard Leadership Education Curriculum developed by the denominations through the International Council. The Standard Curriculum has had a very interesting evolution which it is not necessary to review in this place. During the twenty-five years in which it has been developed, it has performed a notable service. We ought always to remember the fact that hundreds of thousands of workers have received some training through the medium of the Standard Curriculum. Moreover in the thinking of the denominations and the church generally, it has upheld the ideal of a trained leadership.

The Standard Curriculum now consists of First, Second and Third Series courses leading at various stages to marks of attainment in the form of Certificates of Progress. Third Series is not extensively used. But in the First and Second Series alone there is a total of 162 courses, 52 of them in First Series and 110 in Second Series.

These courses are in the Standard Curriculum through official action of the denominations and approval by the International Council. The denominations are free to use them as they wish. This policy results in a good deal of variety in the denominational leadership education program. While following the same general policies about requirements, denominational leadership education programs range all the way from the few selected courses promoted by some denominations to the 200 or more courses in the comprehensive leadership program of one church. There is now a strong trend toward selection and promotion of a basic curriculum, a few prescribed courses as the minimum requirement for teachers.

The interdenominational use of the Standard Curriculum is administered through the Leadership Department of the International Council. In the New Standard Curriculum as finally approved in 1936, the peak year for number of schools, there were 677 interdenominational schools with approximately 3,000 classes. About 35,000 credits were issued and it is safe to say that this indicates an enrollment of not less than 75,000 persons in these community schools. In the same period 120,000 credits were granted by denominational boards using the Standard Curriculum. No accurate check is possible but indications are that only from one-third to one-half on an average "take work for credit" in interdenominational schools. The proportion probably runs about the same for most denominational schools although there is some indication that the proportion of "credit work" may be higher in the denominational schools. Of course the war seriously affected community leadership schools both in number and in enrollment.



The peak year for credits under the New Standard Curriculum was September 1, 1938 to August 31, 1939. It is significant to note that a strong upward trend in 1944-45 from the low of war years was checked by Office of Defense Transportation restrictions in the summer of 1945. Several summer schools, normally issuing hundreds of course cards, were cancelled. The following summaries are of interest:

Number of Accredited Schools Under  
Council Auspices

Year	Number of schools
1938-39	643
1939-40	665
1940-41	635
1941-42	615
1942-43	509
1943-44	549
1944-45	593

Number of Credits Issued by the Council

Year	Total Credits, All Series	Percentage (Gain or loss)
Sept. 1, 1938 to Aug. 31, 1939	37,261	
" " 1939 " " " 1940	34,248	- 8.08%
" " 1940 " " " 1941	30,235	- 11.7
" " 1941 " " " 1942	29,510	- 2.4
" " 1942 " " " 1943	21,218	- 28.7
" " 1943 " " " 1944	23,075	+ 8.7
" " 1944 " " " 1945	27,100	+ 17.4

Number of Credits

Reported by Denominations

Year	Total Credits, All Series	Percentage (Gain or loss)
1938-39	146,193	
1939-40	124,669	14.7%
1940-41	159,681*	+ 28.
1941-42	129,404	- 17.9
1942-43	120,378	- 6.5
1943-44	123,134	+ 1.7
1944-45	125,898	+ 2.2

\* This high figure in denominational credits reflects an unusual circumstance. During that year transition was made from the extensive program of "short courses" of the former Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to the First Series of the Standard Curriculum. Credits for the "short courses" were not counted in former years as the requirements differed from those of the Standard Curriculum.

It is fair to say that there has been a great value in the standards provided through the Standard Curriculum. There seems to be a growing recognition of that fact, following some revolt a few years ago against the idea of standards and credits. Today deans and instructors are more and more recognizing the value of an approved standard school as an incentive for better work. The pressure of a minimum standard in terms of time and effort is an important motivation.

Yet it must be recognized that the "standard" class, in which lecture, discussion, reports, papers and textbook assignments have been the chief media of instruction, is only a part of an effective program, though an important part.

It may be said that there has been, as in all education, no magic in the courses themselves to provide good leadership for the church. The standard curriculum has been only a means. Where this means has been used with imagination and skill it has had an effect. Where not so used it has been exceedingly disappointing. It has been often pointed out during recent years that we have not had results in the total program of the local church or in improved church school practices, commensurate with the time and effort put into the type of leadership education work we have been doing. Many have remarked that there has been precious little carry-over from the average leadership education course into the practice of the teacher. Only a little insight would show us that this might reasonably have been expected. When it comes to methods and techniques people learn by doing and by participation, by being shown and not simply by being told. One does not learn to swim from reading a book on the various strokes to be used in swimming, if we may use a trite illustration.

It is important to note that a considerable growth in leadership education is taking place among small denominations, among them such groups as the Church of the Nazarene and the Church of God. It is significant that such groups, commonly thought of a few years ago as belonging to the "sects" but now taking on the qualities of many of the older denominations, should vigorously promote leadership education and find a ready response among their churches. These denominations belong to the International Council and follow the standards and policies of the Standard Curriculum. Increasingly, however, they are developing their own textbooks as more suited to the needs of their constituencies.

## V. SYSTEMS OTHER THAN THE STANDARD CURRICULUM

### 1. Religious Education Council of Canada

One constituent agency of the International Council, the Religious Education Council of Canada, has its own system of leadership education. It includes five separate divisions of curricula: preparatory, standard, specialization, youth and advanced. These courses are prepared inter-denominationally but are promoted and administered by the denominations. Courses are given in the local church, in cooperative regional schools, in normal schools, in secondary schools, colleges, and theological seminaries, in summer and winter camps, and by correspondence.

The Young People's Union of the United Church of Canada has developed Executive Leadership Courses for the officers of their various departments. This has resulted in a responsibly trained youth leadership with a very high degree of effectiveness.

## 2. Southern Baptist Convention

Perhaps the most notable results in leadership education among all denominations have been achieved by the Southern Baptist churches. Through their regular leadership curriculum and through their Baptist Training Unions they have reached hundreds of thousands of their workers. The aggressive outreach of Christian education among Southern Baptists may be attributed in large part to this training program. It is highly evangelistic and promotional in nature, but it has steadily improved in methods and materials. It has been and still is strongly "book centered." Credits may be obtained on the basis of reading a prescribed textbook and satisfactorily answering a set of questions on the reading. This is not to imply that there is not much excellent instruction in classes and schools, but mastering a prescribed textbook is the central aim of most courses.

Perhaps the most arresting aspect of the Southern Baptist program is the high degree of motivation. Large numbers of people follow through to the completion of many courses. The strong emphasis on denominational mission and upon evangelism is a factor, as is also vigorous promotion. The program is given strong field support supplied with ample funds provided in part by the very profitable sale of textbooks.

Southern Baptist requirements differ somewhat from those of the Standard Curriculum of the International Council. Where Southern Baptists cooperate in interdenominational schools, as they now do in a few instances, they may receive credit from their own board if they read and report on their own textbook for the course.

## 3. Evangelical Leadership Training Association

Another leadership education effort should be mentioned here; namely, the Evangelical Leadership Training Association. This is a non-denominational program, having its roots in Moody Bible Institute and Scripture Press, and appealing for its support to fundamentalist groups of all denominations. The movement seems to be growing. It now claims over one hundred accredited schools and has a full time promotional secretary. It is likely to receive vigorous support from the National Association of Evangelicals. On a community basis it furnishes leadership training opportunities for churches which have not normally cooperated with other cooperative efforts. So far only a little pressure has been put upon denominational boards to recognize work done under the auspices of the Evangelical Leadership Training Association by members of their churches. This pressure may increase as the work of the Association grows.



## VI. THE VARIED AVENUES OF TRAINING

The various means of leadership education both formal and informal have been used under many different circumstances. Besides the classes and schools in local church and community which we have had in mind while discussing the various curricula, there have been leadership education enterprises of all types constantly in use throughout the church. Conferences, institutes, forums, demonstration classes and schools, laboratory schools, and workshops have all had a large place and they are growing both in numbers and in importance. It would seem that the ways in which these various activities contribute to the training of leadership are too widely known to need description here.

One ought to say, however, that the nature of these groups has gradually been shifting in a way that may prove to be most significant for Christian education. They are much more "experience centered" than formerly. They begin to take into account the ways in which full democratic participation helps people grow. There is less than there used to be of the leader standing off from the group, the expert telling others how to think and how to act. This is especially true of the laboratory schools and workshops, developments which offer great promise for the training of leadership in the church. Some of these schools have been wonderfully productive. There seems little doubt that within a few years we shall have good laboratory schools and workshops within the reach of all church school workers across the nation.

### 1. Laboratory Schools

The laboratory school, in which student-teachers work with children under careful guidance of experienced instructors, has proved to be a highly effective means of training. Akin to it is the observation-practice school, which is also very effective, and in which workers observe a skilled teacher at work; participate in planning and evaluation; and participate to some extent in the learning activities of the group. Success seems to depend upon the following factors, among others: leadership proficient in teaching adults as well as children; proper selection and preparation of the student-teachers or observers; full democratic participation of all in planning and in evaluating the process; a high morale based on Christian fellowship, a strong spiritual or devotional motivation; and emphasis upon serious study and thorough preparation of both mind and heart for the creative laboratory process.

Perhaps the best single tribute to the laboratory school is the fact that so many older and experienced teachers point to their first laboratory school experience as a turning-point in their lives, both in personal religious growth and in educational insights and practices.

### 2. Workshops

The designation "workshop" has been applied in recent years to all sorts of conferences, institutes, committee meetings and other educational activities. However there are outstanding characteristics of the workshop approach to teacher education as it has been developed by public school educators and as it is being adapted for use in training church workers.

"The essential features are intensive consideration of practical problems that have arisen from the daily functioning of the teaching job, flexible and informal working conditions, active sharing by workshopers in developing plans for individual or group study, and easy access to a wide range of resources - in terms of staff, fellow participants, books, and other aids to learning. The usual schedule consists of meetings in the morning of small discussion groups organized around the workshopers' stated interests; free time in the afternoon for individual work, conferences, and recreation; and general meetings and individual work in the evenings. A prominent feature in many workshops is a definite period set aside for informal work in the arts. It is usual for participants and staff members to make a point of living together, and to foster informal contacts of all sorts. A significant consequence of the general arrangements is that emphasis tends to develop on organic relationships so that participants are stimulated to think in terms of the whole child, the whole curriculum, and the whole community in which they work."

### 3. Reading

Reading has always been one of the ways of leadership development. There has been a vast production of religious education literature in the Protestant church in the last twenty-five years. However, the consuming public has been relatively small. Here, as with the training courses, the vast majority of people have read very little and where they have read they have not been able to carry over into practice a significant amount of what they have read. In this respect there seems to be a considerable improvement in very recent years. Church school magazines have been improved and the circulation increased. There has been great interest in the development of church libraries and the promotion of reading courses. In this connection, the remarkable growth of libraries among Southern Baptist churches is worth noting. A full time staff member directs this library service.

### 4. Counseling

Due perhaps to the great growth of interest in psychology, personal and group counseling has come to have an increasingly important place in leadership development. It is one of the most fruitful ways of helping people to grow on the job. The difficulty in most local churches is to find someone who is capable of doing counseling. Attention seems to focus on the minister and a great deal is being done to help the pastor improve his counseling. However, most of the emphasis has been upon the solution of personal problems and not upon the use of counseling as a means of helping people to grow as effective participants with other workers in the common enterprise of Christian education.

### 5. Lesson Helps

One of the most extensive means of leadership development has been the lesson helps, such as denominational teachers' quarterlies,

\* Prall, C.E. and Cushman, C.F.; Teacher Education in Service; p. 206; American Council on Education; Washington, D.C.; 1944.

periodicals, and various independent systems of teachers' notes. Here again the results have been somewhat disappointing. The reasons are not far to seek. In the first place the average Sunday school teacher knows very little about the theory of curriculum and makes too little use of the aids to teaching. Some experiments that have been made in public education seem to indicate furthermore, that all such helps are likely to be too generalized. They do not have sufficient apparent application to the local situation to challenge attention of the teacher. If this is true for public school teachers it is much more true for church school teachers. The untrained teacher cannot select from among many suggestions and cannot translate these suggestions and instructions into terms pertinent to his own situation.

Still, this training through means of the lesson helps remains one of the most hopeful ways of reaching the average worker. There is no way of telling how much improvement there has been in Christian education through the efforts of lesson writers and editors to improve this means of aiding the teacher.

#### 6. Relating Leadership Education to Lesson Materials

One of the most significant leadership education trends at the present time is the effort on the part of several denominations to gear their leadership education training specifically to the use of their own materials. This has the merit of touching the teacher at a point of a present felt need, that is, the task of teaching a current series of lessons. This way of training has many byproducts, such as skill in planning a lesson, conducting a class session, measuring outcomes and so forth. It would seem wise to spend more time and effort in research and investigation as to the best means of training through the use of helps in connection with materials used in the church school.

A word of caution may however, be thrown in here. The popularity of training courses on "how to use the \_\_\_\_\_ lessons in the junior department" may attract the teachers who want to do a better job. But it also may center too largely on content and techniques to neglect of knowledge of the pupil and the broader aspects of teaching. This effort to improve the actual teaching of content in the classroom, so greatly needed, must be accompanied by improvements in the many other aspects of the church's educational program. Worship, service, fellowship, social life, participation in the full life of the church, and a Christian family life are also part of the teaching program and are an essential as good "classroom" teaching to the nurture of the Christian life.

#### 7. National Field Services

Another vast area of leadership education has been carried on through the national field services of denominational boards of Christian education. A considerable number of these "leaders of leaders" have been in action throughout the country with a primary emphasis upon the effort to help leaders in the church to do their work well. Many an improvement in the educational program of local churches stems from the efforts of these field workers and from their productive work as counselors, teachers and writers.



There has also been a great contribution to leadership development on the part of state, area and provincial field workers, both employed and volunteer, working in a variety of patterns. But the contribution of these field workers has been limited by factors which may be worth noting here. In the first place, there are not nearly enough field workers. Only large denominations can provide employed field staffs. Many field workers, furthermore, are too burdened with organizational detail and promotion. In fact, in the field of Christian education too many of them are selected for their promotional and organizational skill rather than for their effectiveness as educators. It is possible for the field worker to be oriented largely toward the national board's program and not toward the local church and its community setting. He may easily become more "promoter" than educator and continue to make a fine showing as far as organization and promotion is concerned, while causing very little to happen by way of improvement in the educational practices of the local churches under his jurisdiction.

From the standpoint of leadership development and the improvement of teaching in the local church it would seem that careful study ought to be made of field services in Christian education. Even in the case of the area field man his leadership is not sufficiently indigenous. It is too generalized, and does not serve actually to change the local situation so as to make effective Christian education possible. Perhaps field services in Christian education ought to emphasize the sort of activities that will train more volunteer and semi-professional key workers who are creative Christian teachers and who are able to make something happen in the lives of people. We are still too conscious of the strength of institutions and of statistics, and not enough aware of what it is that creates a life-changing local church fellowship with a climate conducive to Christian nurture.

## VII. THE CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We should not overlook the significance of the current demand for re-examining the Christian foundations of leadership development. Educators today are searching for better insights into the meaning of education for democratic living and for the abundant life. With all due regard to the contributions of psychology, to the many advances in education in the secular field, and to the effect upon our thinking of the scientific approach, the Christian religion has things to say about the nature of man and his purpose which must remain central in Christian teaching. Therefore, Christian leadership education is distinctive in purpose, in content and even in method. In method it has certain values to preserve, spiritual ends which are based upon its theory of man and the meaning of life.

Dr. Clarence Tucker Craig, a member of the Committee says,

"The training of teachers involves more than acquaintance with effective methods and mastery of a body of content material. Christian teaching requires a background of experience of Christian faith. Teachers need growing appreciation of what is involved in a Christian approach to life. This does not mean simply a lay version of the details of systematic theology. It involves a grounding in those basic convictions which give

specific character to the Christian enterprise. Our teachers must learn how to approach their students from the standpoints of their needs; but they also require instruction which will clarify their own vague beliefs and give definiteness to the Christian faith which inspires every teaching project within the church."

Christian leadership education seeks to nurture growing persons in the Christian life. It seeks to increase their knowledge of the will of God and of the mind of Christ. It seeks to deepen their experiences to spiritualize their attitudes, their appreciations, their hopes, their purposes. It seeks to strengthen their faith. Upon these foundations or as a corollary to them, it has for its specific purpose the development of skills in sharing this knowledge and experience and faith with other growing persons.

Christian leadership education conceives of a teacher or leader as being himself within the process, a learner along with others. Growing persons help other persons to grow. Only lives that have been changed and are still being changed are effective in changing other lives. Only those who have known the joys of discovery and continue to find fresh joy in discovery each new day can open and stir the soul of others.

Now more than ever Christian education is seeing the centrality of the person in the educative process. Teaching is a matter of creative person-to-person inter-action. Christian education, therefore, must be concerned with the religious experience of the leader, his commitment, his spiritual growth and well being, as well as with his knowledge and his skill.

### VIII. METHOD AND CONTENT

Rather than to say that there has been a retreat from emphasis upon method, it might be more accurate to say that there is better appreciation and understanding of method in relationship to this central place of the person in teaching. Recently this significant statement appeared in the report of a study concerning professional workers in one denomination.

"Everyone spoke of a need for persons who would attract people to the Christian way of life by the quality of their own lives. Of the combination of factors that makes this possible for the ordinary person little is known. All agree that religious devotion is basic to any service in the church. The agreement is almost unanimous that there must be other elements in the individual's character besides religious devotion if he is to hold a position of leadership. But this curious entity which is called 'an attractive, well balanced personality,' to which laity and clergy alike set such high value, defies analysis. While it is related to native endowment and early experiences of the person, it is also deeply rooted in his response to his environment. A person in one situation may appear to have an

entirely different personality from that which he has in another."

This central place of the Christianized personality in the Christian education process would seem to call for greater knowledge of how we develop the sort of person who provides this type of leadership. We may produce the best possible type of curriculum. We may coach people in all the latest skills. But if there is a dearth of the type of persons who are willing and able to serve through the life of the church in the redemptive process which is the church's primary function, then we shall continue in a losing fight against the onslaught of secularism. \*

In the area of leadership education there has been a good deal of unnecessary debate as to content-centered vs. method-centered training. No one teaches without content or without method. The question is not whether we shall have method but whether we shall have effective method or ineffective method. When it comes to the matter of content there will always be debate within the Christian faith, since it is almost impossible to arrive at a content which is universally acceptable. As has been pointed out, however, both progressive educators and conservatives have not had an adequate idea either of content or of method in teaching the Christian religion.

For one thing, content is not simply knowledge about religion. Content for Christian education is the good news of salvation. It is a "knowledge" of the word of God, not only in the mind but in the heart, and it is an understanding of the major purpose of the church in the redemptive process. Even to be "Bible centered" is not sufficient. It is not the use of the Bible in teaching, but how it is used, ~~how~~ it is used and to what issue in daily living which makes the difference.

Method must serve a redemptive purpose. Given the view of content which we have tried to suggest above, the aims can only be attained through appropriate method. Content and method become integral parts of a total process. There has been far too much use of methods which have not been in keeping with the spiritual purpose of Christian education. That is why it is partly true at least that the church school has sometimes served only to inoculate children and youth against a vital religious experience, and to give them and their parents the illusion that they have had Christian education when in fact they have had only a scattering of information about religion.

#### IX. MOTIVATION A CENTRAL PROBLEM

Motivation remains, perhaps, the central problem of leadership education. The fact that we have made available so many opportunities for leadership education in the Christian church during the last quarter century and that a comparatively small number of those involved in leadership responsibilities in the church have been induced to avail themselves of these opportunities, is a significant commentary.



What is it that makes people wish to improve their knowledge and their skill so that they may more effectively share their experience with other persons?

The clue to the answer to this question seems to be found in the present day emphasis upon meeting basic human needs. We have talked a lot in recent years in Christian education about meeting needs. Too often we have only been adjusting our program to current interests. Current interests may be something vastly different from the fundamental human needs of which persons are not always conscious or which they may greatly disguise.

The understanding of fundamental human needs and effective ways of meeting these needs seems to be the key to motivation in education. Very clearly defined goals in terms of basic needs are fundamental. Also, say the educators, at least a portion of these goals must be attainable within a reasonably short period and they must be capable of some sort of evaluation. In the public school field under the auspices of the American Council on Education, a Commission on Teacher Education has been at work for several years. Their findings are significant for leadership education. They indicate among other things that even among professionally trained people it is necessary to start with the relatively specific needs which persons themselves recognize and with problems which they recognize as being their own problems in relationship to their own task which they are expected to accomplish. In Christian education we have talked a good deal about "starting where people are" but we have not understood very well what that means.

In the field of motivation we need a great deal more experimentation and research. This is certainly a challenging problem for our larger and stronger denominations who have prided themselves on having a sound educational program but who have felt themselves more and more challenged by the aggressiveness, spontaneity, and power of the sect groups. An example of the attempt to recapture the spiritual motivation so necessary to religious education is the Mission to Teachers which has been singularly successful.

In education for Christian service a large factor in motivation is adequate attention to the cultivation of the devotional life of the worker. Deep satisfactions of growth and discovery in personal religious living should be the lot of all Christians, but especially of those who are called to guide the Christian growth of others through teaching and group leadership.

The motive power of worship is well known. Training and experience in worship, both private and corporate, are essential to any well-rounded training program. It follows also that greater skill in guiding children and youth to a true experience of worship is widely needed. That which passes as worship in much of our Christian education uses the forms and the materials of worship without achieving any deep sense of the presence of God. Worship is central in the life of the church and must not be left to chance in any Christian education process which makes any claim to adequacy.

Another point in education to which we need to give attention is that of the essential indigenous nature of the leadership to which persons respond most readily. There has been a considerable swing in public education toward an emphasis upon adapting the educative process to the particular factors in the situation in which education is going forward. The new interest in in-service training of the teacher has come about through the recognition that teachers make greatest progress in increasing their capacity to teach through the efforts they make in connection with their own jobs, and with their own co-workers in the light of the particular situation and circumstances in which they must teach; much greater improvement in fact than they make in the individualized study approach afforded to them in the usual teacher training institution or graduate school.

Certainly we need to recognize in the Protestant church that our process of stimulating education "from the top down" has not been as productive as it ought to have been. We know that the roots of Christian education are in the local church fellowship, with its homes and the community life in which it has its setting. We know that in spite of all of our efforts in curriculum production and field guidance we (today) have thousands of local churches which are failing in this educational job in large measure. The problem is how to make something happen at the grass roots which will revitalize these local fellowships in their educative function. Perhaps if we had spent as much time and effort and money in helping parents to do their job as Christian educators and in training pastors and key workers in the local church as we have spent upon the production of new types of curriculum and the promotion of various schemes for raising the church by its bootstraps we should now be less alarmed about the state of Christian education.

X. THE LEADERSHIP NEEDS OF TODAY

We ought to turn for a brief look at the leadership needs of the church from the standpoint of its capacity to fulfill its teaching mission.

It will be rather universally accepted that the pastor is the key person. He now is, and in any foreseeable future will continue to be, the only professionally trained person in the vast majority of our churches. It must be admitted at once that from the standpoint of Christian education, training for the ministry has been woefully deficient. The majority of ministers by their own standards are not sufficiently trained for their tasks from any point of view, but certainly not from the standpoint of their function as educators. This fact is made more evident by those thousands of well trained ministers of many denominations who are in the forefront of thought and practice in Christian education, and who have amply demonstrated what may be done in the local church through vigorous educational leadership on the part of the pastor.

As stated above, the training of the minister for his educational function is being carefully scrutinized at the present time, both by the church in general and by the seminaries. His educational responsibility is coming to be more fully recognized. But it still remains true that religious education has a major place in only a few seminaries and has

had to fight a strenuous battle to gain recognition on a par with other seminary studies. It ought to be recognized, furthermore, that a few electives or even required courses in Christian education in the seminary curriculum are not sufficient. The minister comes to accept his responsibility as an educator and to understand educational principles only as his entire seminary training is constructed upon the recognition of his continued educational function as preacher, teacher, and administrator. Scholarly courses in Bible and church history ought to be taught with some recognition of the pastor's educational use of this knowledge in a local church.

Every pastor ought to have some knowledge of educational principles. Perhaps we should say first of all that he ought to accept his educational responsibility. He ought to know good educational administration and supervision so that he understands when the church is adequately organized for education. He ought to have some idea of how to evaluate the educational processes going on in his church, how to assess the needs, and how and where to get help.

In an article on the training of volunteer lay leaders in rural parishes, Ralph L. Williamson writes as follows:

"Rural pastors do not seem to have a clearly understood set of principles concerning leadership development and how it occurs. This applies to seminary trained men as well as others, for the seminaries give little attention to teaching the principles of leadership development."

Williamson does not place all blame upon the pastor or the seminary.

"It must be admitted that one of the major difficulties of rural churches is a growing tendency to think of the pastor administratively as employed by the church to do its work on behalf of the members rather than to direct those members in doing the work of the church themselves. It is the high duty and privilege of the rural pastor to be a creator of leaders. Some pastors enter a new field expecting to 'discover' leaders and when they do not find them they throw up their hands in despair. Instead, they should look forward to creating leaders."

What Dr. Williamson has written out of his long study of the rural church we believe to be equally applicable to most urban churches. The pastor has not been adequately prepared for his task as a "leader of leaders."

There is reason for great hope in the improvement noted in seminary training. There are significant trends. The growing cooperation between denominational boards of Christian education and church-related colleges and seminaries, the various programs for supervised field work among seminaries, and the development of training parishes in connection with seminaries where the accent upon education is pronounced are developments which give us great encouragement. The education of the



ministry in the Protestant church for an adequate fulfillment of its educational mission stands as a great challenge.

## XI. THE NEED OF PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED CHURCH WORKERS

We have already pointed out the great lack of professionally trained workers in the Protestant church. Directors of Christian education, weekday school teachers, camp leaders, social workers, deaconesses, teachers in church schools and colleges, are not only insufficient to meet the demand but on the whole they are inadequately trained. The church has shown far less initiative and foresight in recruiting and training for the church at home than it has shown in selecting and training missionaries for the foreign field. Whereas the missionary has had status and security to a degree, the professional worker in Christian education has had to confront confused standards, inadequate recognition, poor salaries, and almost a total absence of any job security.

A great deal more attention must be paid to the development of these professional workers in Christian education. This means, explicitly, that the Church must speedily change its traditional pattern so that these workers, mostly women, may have status and security in the church, status and security which they do not now enjoy.

One of the most hopeful signs is the development of colleges in Christian education in connection with seminaries, with the full support of denominational bodies. The recruiting of sufficient candidates remains a serious problem. It will continue so until inducements are greatly improved.

There is a pressing demand for trained leadership in connection with weekday religious education, now expanding much more rapidly than the supply of competent leadership. We may predict that if the Protestant church is not willing to furnish an adequately trained and adequately paid teaching force for weekday schools of religion, it will lose this great opportunity through neglect and inefficiency. We venture to suggest that if we could give more assurance at the point of salary and security we might recruit an increasing number of trained and experienced public school teachers for work in the weekday school. With a minimum of training and with skillful supervision these teachers would prove to be most effective.

The vast expansion of vacation religious education is a great challenge to the development of leadership. Even during these <sup>war</sup> years the numbers of junior and intermediate camps have been increasing by leaps and bounds. It is conceivable that in the very near future camps and conferences for juniors, intermediates and young people as well as adults will be within the reach of every local church.

Especially for rapidly multiplying children's and youth camps do we need to develop a skilled leadership. Where they are well managed by skilled leaders these camps have proved to be one of the

finest mediums for highly effective religious education. But a mere outing experience does not make a camp or conference effective from the standpoint of Christian education. We cannot afford to waste this tremendous opportunity because of lack of real educational insight and skilled leadership. We know that the value of youth camps and conferences depends largely upon the quality of adult leadership. We know that we are pressed to find sufficient good leadership now for our existing conferences. The problem will become more insistent unless our training program is enlarged.

It is obvious that the demand for vacation school teachers and leaders will continue to increase very rapidly. Here again the church is faced with disappointment in a great opportunity if it is not able to furnish good educational leadership.

In the field of youth work in the local church it is becoming apparent that much more emphasis should have been placed upon the training of adult counselors of youth. In all the years that we have concentrated upon young people themselves we have neglected to enlist and train a sufficient number of adult counselors. Consequently, many a youth program in a local church has failed for lack of adult participation.

Another area for leadership that seems to be developing is that of family counseling. The new interest in the Christian family and in adult education has opened up an opportunity for family counseling of which we are not now able to take full advantage.

Perhaps one of the greatest opportunities for Christian education in the Protestant church today is in the use of volunteer field workers, those people in the community or in the area who are able to furnish expert leadership and guidance to a number of local churches where such leadership is lacking. These volunteer or part-time workers, because they are generally active in a local church and have come up through a local church experience, have proved very productive. They are sufficiently close to the situation in community or area to furnish an indigenous leadership. We need to increase the number of these workers literally by thousands. Vast numbers of our churches will never be able to employ professional help other than the pastor. Many of them do not even have the full-time service of a pastor. The need is urgent for the development of volunteer workers who might be available, under denominational direction, to give assistance to local churches over a period of weeks or even months. Through this method we might revitalize the life of many a local church.

There is also a need for the training of instructors for leadership classes, for workshops and for laboratory schools. The demand for tested laboratory school teachers exceeds the supply and the demand is growing. Laboratory school teaching calls for peculiar talents and training under careful guidance. We must intensify our efforts to provide an adequate supply of persons competent for such teaching.

We are experiencing a new interest in the training of parents as teachers of religion. But an uneasy apprehension arises now and again that we are doing a great deal more talking about it today than is

warranted by our accomplishments. We are paying a price for long years of relieving the parent of his educational responsibility through creating the impression that if he would just support the church school by sending his children he would be conferring a great favor upon the church. Parent education and all leadership functions in the local church are closely bound up together. When the adult is helped to fulfill his educational function in the home and in the family, he is being given the fundamental training which may be carried over into his functioning in the group and in the fellowship of the church.

The present-day breakdown in the American home and the crisis in our society demands an all-out effort in parent education. But in the mind of the vast majority of people the Sunday school still remains the central educational agency in the Christian church. To the two million or more volunteer lay teachers and officers in the Sunday schools who must be recruited and motivated to serve if the great institution of the Sunday school is to go forward, we must look for a great deal of the work that must be done in Christian education for a long time to come. We are deeply grateful for a vastly increased effort on the part of the denominations as well as interdenominational bodies to improve the quality of church school teaching through the training of teachers.

But even the most optimistic is not likely to feel that promotion of leadership education by national agencies is going to prove much more successful in the future than it has proved in the past. Every year we are able to get several hundred thousand church school leaders to take some work in leadership education. But the fact remains that many thousands of them take only one or two courses. Although these persons find the courses interesting and helpful personally they seem to make very little difference in their practice in many cases. The terrific turnover in teaching staffs remains a major unresolved problem of the church school administrator.

The improvement of the administration and supervision of Christian education in the local church is a major concern today. In many churches there is practically no supervision. There is little or no evaluation, no guidance for the individual teacher at his specific task, no measurement of results. Along with insufficient training of the minister for his educational responsibility, we must admit a wide-spread neglect of the lay administrators of the Sunday church school.

Often the general superintendent has no training for his job. He does not think of himself as "teacher" or as "educator", but only as organizer and promoter. His well-intentioned methods may defeat the best educational aims. He often does not know what is needed. If he is aware of need he does not know where to turn for help.

It would seem that in-service training - that is, growth through guidance on the job, in which there is such great promise - depends to a large extent upon improvement in administration and supervision in the local church. We must reach and train those who so largely determine the conditions under which the teacher works.



Fortunately there are hopeful signs of an awakened lay interest. From over the country in recent months\*come reports of revitalized or new superintendents fellowships. Gatherings of superintendents have frequently brought out double the anticipated attendance. Perhaps the time is here for extensive effort toward the improvement of administration and supervision in the church school.

Educationally, something must happen to the whole structure of many local churches before teachers will see much point in being trained for their jobs. How can we expect lay workers to be greatly concerned about adequate preparation and a high devotion to their task in churches where nothing very much is happening to persons, nor has happened to them for perhaps many years? We fail to reach the local church worker because various bottlenecks prevent our getting to him. But we fail to reach him largely because what we have to say about the necessity of training seems so irrelevant to his situation or to his present concept of what Christian education is.

## XII. THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF ALL PARTICIPANTS

One other observation should be made about leadership education and that is that our efforts throughout the church ought to be directed more consciously toward making every person in the church aware of the importance of his essential role. Each person who participates at all has an educational function in the group. From a Christian point of view a leader is not someone who does something for or to other people. He is one who shares with other people and learns from them while he guides and helps them in learning. There has come to be a renewed interest on what is known as functional leadership. This means that a person remains always a member of the group on a par with everyone else in it, but that he is privileged to give counsel and help and leadership at points at which he has particular capacity and evokes a natural response from his group. Therefore, while he is leading at one point he is being led at many others. He is not above or beyond the group. He is one of the group. He leads as he serves and only as he serves.

From this point of view many more persons might be led to see the importance of their function. From this broad base a much larger number of key leaders could be emerging.

Many persons feel that the war set going a revolution in education which will have tremendous effects. New methods by which millions upon millions were quickly trained for new jobs and for the complex business of war have called in question many time-honored methods. For example, visual method has cut the time of many training processes from 40 to 60%. How much of the technique suited to science and industry can be carried over in other types of education is not yet clear but the effects are already being felt, especially in the realm of visual aid.

Then, too, the way in which millions of persons were enlisted for volunteer services requiring arduous training and many hours of often difficult labor, has caused the church once more to ask where in the

realm of motivation we can find for peace the equivalent of war.

### XIII. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Leadership development will always remain a major problem in Christian education. People are fond of talking about it as if by finding the right formula we could settle it once for all and get on with the business of the church. But leadership development is fundamentally wrapped up with continuing growth and development. It has to do with persons. And persons grow and change. It has to do with human institutions. And institutions are not static. New life pushes up constantly to break old forms and molds. New situations demand new solutions.

We need to understand the dynamic relationship which exists between a vital program really meeting human need and the natural, spontaneous leadership potential thrown up by such a program. Leadership training to perpetuate an activity or function that is already outworn or totally inadequate to its task, is far different from leadership guidance in a creative program which is responding sensitively to the pressures of human need. We are always in danger of being deluded in religious institutions because religion involves so much which seems

"given," fixed, ever the same, unchanging. But in fact there is nothing so ever-new, so varied, so dynamic and revolutionary as Christianity. No teacher's task is the same this week as last because each child before him has lived the intervening week.

As George A. Coe said so well years ago, "The church as an educational institution is primarily a fellowship of older and younger persons." Christian education in the broad sense and in a basic sense is the Christian community sharing its life with all growing persons, its tradition, its experience, its hope, its faith, its mission. The adequate teaching of the content of the Christian faith is not possible apart from this total sharing of life. Nor is complete Christian nurture possible apart from adequate teaching of content. Yet one cannot escape the conviction that Christian faith and Christian conduct are not based primarily upon intellectual knowledge but upon appreciations, attitudes and affections. These are products of family and group life, taught more unconsciously than consciously.

The church, then looks for a leadership program that can perceive and guide the creative functions by which the family of the church, with spontaneity but in ordered fashion, brings the riches of Christ and His Kingdom to bear on human life. It is no longer a question only of improving the Sunday school, or setting up a new youth program or launching a program of parent education. It is a question of how to revitalize the total church as a fellowship so that it is redemptive in quality.

Jesus taught in the synagogues, but he could not exert his leadership within the framework of the church of his time. This is simply to imply that we must be alert to the explosive power of real leadership and of new ways of releasing leadership. We must beware

that the church which has always stoned the prophets does not fail to see the points at which human life is being most drastically touched and changed today. Said a church leader recently:

"A survey of (this county) showed clearly that the cooperative was a far more potent force in education than the thirteen churches. Whereas the churches are begging leaders of any kind for a program largely traditional and non-productive, the cooperative is getting excellent leadership and carrying on a successful training program."

We have said that the leadership education problem is a continuous problem, and that is true, but there is an immediate need of gigantic proportions. We must develop an adequate educational philosophy in line with a Christian view of man, which takes full account of modern scientific findings.

Is it true of the church that so much energy and money goes into a ponderous machinery which we are unwilling to evaluate that we have too little left for exploration of the truly creative? The atom bomb made huge fleets of heavy bombers and large contingents of infantry obsolete overnight. But it will be a long time before the military mind accommodates itself to that fact. Perhaps much of our educational approach for which we desperately seek "leadership" is likewise outmoded.

#### XIV. CONCLUSION

Do we still have confidence in the American Sunday school teacher? We answer with a most definite, "Yes." It is unimaginable what our present spiritual status would be, had we not have had the patient, persistent, often long-suffering Sunday school teachers - two million strong - who have labored Sunday after Sunday - often poorly qualified, frequently unencouraged and many times unrecognized.

In spite of all the criticisms which we and others have made of them, we must still admit that the American Protestant Sunday school teacher has made a contribution to American life which has been unexcelled. The strength of American Protestantism is, in large measure, the result of faithful lay teachers. There can be a glorious tomorrow because of a great yesterday.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- I. That the International Council of Religious Education invite the American Association of Theological Seminaries to join with the Council in setting up a committee consisting of five members from each agency to study the ways in which the International Council of Religious Education, its constituent Boards of Christian Education, and the Theological Seminaries may cooperate more fully (1) in helping seminary students and ministers to understand, accept, and fulfill their important responsibilities in Christian education and (2) in the recruiting and preparation of professional workers in Christian education.



II. That the International Council of Religious Education invite the Council of Church Boards of Education to join in forming a committee consisting of five members from each agency to study ways in which the Council, its constituent Boards of Education and the church-related colleges may cooperate (1) in the more effective preparation of all college young people for Christian service in church and community, and (2) in the recruiting and training of young people for full-time Christian service.

III. That provision be made through one of the following means for attention to problems of affording a more adequate professional leadership in Christian education:

1. Through joint action by the Federal Council and the International Council, broadening the scope of the new Commission on the Ministry;
2. Through creation of a new department in the International Council;
3. Through adding to the staff and extending the responsibilities of the International Council Department of Leadership Education.

This department or commission would:

1. Work for wider recognition of the importance of a larger and better trained professional leadership in Christian education;
2. Cooperate with boards of Christian education and with colleges and seminaries in selective recruiting for the vocation of Christian education;
3. Carry on necessary research concerning needs and opportunities in the teaching ministry;
4. Help to promote acceptance of minimum standards of training, salaries, and job security;
5. Act as a clearing house and placement bureau for agencies and for workers in Christian education;
6. Encourage greater training opportunities for those wishing to enter Christian education as directors in local churches, weekday school teachers, church social workers, etc.

IV. That special emphasis be laid throughout the church on the training of lay leaders, with special attention to the selection and training of lay men and women for volunteer service in the church school. Such an emphasis needs to be strengthened in our denominational and interdenominational youth, young adult and adult movements.

V. That Boards of Christian Education take every step possible to provide the leadership and the funds for more laboratory schools and workshons. These have proved a most fruitful means of im-

proving the teaching work of the church. They generally need liberal subsidies in leadership and funds. In many areas strong schools of high standard can best be provided cooperatively.

- VI. That denominational Boards of Christian Education and their field forces be urged to supplement the current and commendable intense promotion of leadership education denominationally with a recognition that for hundreds of communities a cooperative approach to leadership education seems to offer the best means of affording opportunities to all the churches and of sharing the best in communities' resources. The community school is by no means the whole answer to the leadership problem; yet it is one tried and proven means which can be vastly extended and improved.
- VII. That the International Council provide in the near future for full and careful consideration of leadership education in all its aspects by all the program committees of the Council so as to facilitate a more coordinated approach, and so as to eliminate, so far as possible, confusion and uncertainty concerning both theory and practice in leadership education.
- VIII. That because there is an immediate need, without further research or study, the Council give recognition and encouragement of the American Sunday school teacher by the use of radio, magazine articles, movies, signboard, and other media of publicity.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN GENERAL CHURCH BOARDS  
OF EDUCATION AND DENOMINATIONAL COLLEGES  
AND DENOMINATIONAL SEMINARIES

In connection with this report, an attempt was made to discover what relationships prevail between General Church Boards of Education and Denominational Colleges and Seminaries. The Committee on Leadership acknowledges its indebtedness to Dr. W. McFerrin Stowe, Director Special Training Enterprises of the Board of Education, The Methodist Church, who carried on the detailed work of this inquiry.

Four inquiries were sent: one to denominational colleges, one to general boards of education, asking about their relationships to their colleges, one to denominational theological seminaries, and one to general boards of education inquiring into their relationships to their seminaries.

A summary of the replies to the four questionnaires is presented here.

I. FINDINGS FROM QUESTIONNAIRES  
SENT TO DENOMINATIONAL COLLEGES

Questionnaires were sent in the name of the International Council of Religious Education to 265 colleges on June 21, 1945. One hundred and thirty replies were received by October 24, and on that date a second copy of the questionnaire was sent to each college which had not returned the first one. Eighty-three additional questionnaires were sent December 10, making the total sent 348. As of January 24, 1946, there were 207 returned, which is approximately a 60% response.

Several difficulties arose for those answering the questionnaires. These were centered primarily around the terminology used in the questions which did not coincide with the terminology used by all of the denominations. Most of those answering the questions were able to do so in spite of this divergency, but sometimes two schools of the same denomination answered a question completely differently because of this. Some denominations do not have a General Board of Education in the sense that the term is used in the questionnaire, but have state, conference, boards of education; others have both.

Still another difficulty in drawing from these inquiries an accurate picture of conditions within the colleges arises from the different types of personality possessed by those answering the questions. An optimistic person is likely to make conditions sound as if they were better than they actually are; a pessimistic person at times fails to see all the good there is in the situation. Both types are evidenced in the answers received. Yet everything considered, it seems that a rather accurate picture can be drawn of religious conditions and relationships within our church colleges. There follows a list of the questions and a resume of the answers received.

Q. 1. Does your college have a close relationship to your denomination's general board of education?

The vast majority of the colleges reported that there is a close relationship. A number of them reported that their denomination had no



general board, but that they did have an intimate relationship with the synod, conference, or association to which they are related. Only approximately 12% answered "no" to this question, and 11% answered "fair." The smaller denominations with fewer colleges (such as the United Brethren in Christ, the Reformed in Christ, the United Lutheran, the Norwegian Lutheran, and the Evangelical) usually seem to have the closest affiliations; of the larger denominations the Presbyterian U.S.A. indicated the closest relations.

- Q. 2. What services are rendered your college by your general board?  
a. Financial? b. Advisory? c. Teaching? d. Other service?

One hundred thirty-seven colleges, almost 66%, reported that they received financial aid from their general boards. This aid in certain cases comes directly from the funds of the board and sometimes is from the governing body of the church and allocated by the board. By subtracting those that have no general board, the percentage becomes approximately 75%. For some colleges, this is only a few dollars a year, while for others the total reported is the major portion of their income.

It is interesting to note that almost exactly the same number of colleges receive advice as receive financial aid from their general board. One hundred thirty-five colleges, or approximately 65%, reported advisory aid from the general board. Many of these are the same schools that receive financial aid, but not all. There are indications that other colleges receive advisory aid as they listed it under some other head. Practically all of the colleges that have general boards seem to be served to some degree in this manner.

Practically none of the colleges receive direct teaching aid from a board but several schools report a visitation by staff members to the campuses. Also some boards have a teacher placement bureau to help colleges find faculty members. Some pay the salary of and so furnish a teacher of Bible or religious education in certain colleges. Some boards give promotional help and publicity aid to a college or colleges. Some give financial advice and help carry out financial campaigns sponsored by the colleges.

In conclusion, it should be said, however, that although many receive advisory aid, for many colleges it is very slight and lacks the authority of knowledge and experience which many colleges seek.

- Q. 3. Do the courses in religious education taught in your college include the program and procedure of religious education in the local churches of your denomination?

The answers to this question are very revealing. Two hundred and five colleges answered this question. Of these, 7 reported no courses in religious education; one of them is planning one; 99 colleges answered "yes"; 32 answered "partially"; 67 answered "no". This indicates that in less than half of the colleges surveyed can a student adequately study his denomination's program of religious education even if he so desires, and as the answers to question 10 will indicate, practically none are required to take any course in religious education. This may point to one of the major reasons why denominational college graduates are not able to give skilled leadership to the educational program in the local churches.

- Q. 4. Do you use any staff members of your general board of educa-

tion as consultants in planning any part of your college curriculum?

To this question 204 replied. One hundred and thirty-two, which is approximately 65%, answered "no." There were 37 who answered "yes" which is approximately 18%. Sixteen answered "partially" and 8 answered "occasionally," which would be approximately 7-3/4% and 4%, respectively. The schools that received help in planning curriculum seem to receive it primarily in regard to the courses in Bible and religion. Aside from this, the vast majority of colleges do not look to nor expect help from their general boards of education.

Q. 5. Do you use any staff members of your general board of education for any teaching in classes or as resource persons for classes?

Two hundred and one answered this question, and of this number 177, or 88%, answered "no." Eight replied "yes" and 16 said "occasionally." One reported that staff members teach "short courses." Some who replied "no" indicated that staff persons did from time to time speak in college chapel. One person may have expressed the feeling of many when he wrote that they would like to have this service, but that the staff was not large enough to furnish such a service.

Q. 6. Do you have in your library available to the students the booklets and manuals on religious education published by your general board of education?

b. Are new books on religious education being added to your library?

Several of the smaller denominations do not have such manuals or booklets as referred to in the "a" portion of this question, and therefore only 199 answers were received. Of this number, 163, or 82%, replied that such resources are available. Thirteen colleges answered "no" to this question, 18 said "partially" and 5 failed to answer this section of the question, indicating that the answer was "no." This is a fine record if this is an accurate picture.

The section of this question asking about books on religious education brought an equally heartening reply. From the 202 schools which answered this, 183 were in the affirmative, 6 in the negative, 5 indicated that they bought some, and 8 failed to answer this section of the question, indicating that the answer is "no." This indicates that between 90% and 95% of the colleges surveyed think they have comparatively modern libraries in the field of religious education.

Q. 7. Does the general board of education have any program for or give any help to the students in your college? Describe.

Approximately 29% answered that the general board had no program for nor did it give any help to the students of their colleges. There were 59 out of 202 who gave this negative answer. A study of those schools which reported a program or help from this source indicated a variety of services by the general board which ranges from financial to field work. By far the largest help comes in the form of scholarships and loan funds. These are administered by the general educational agency of the church. Forty-six per cent of the colleges reported such assistance for the students. However, in many cases these loans or scholarships are available only to



ministerial or other "life service" students.

Other areas of help given are through a general program for students such as the Baptist Student Union, through help in planning and conducting religious emphasis weeks, and by furnishing student workers for campuses. Some General Boards are helping the students, but if the 29% that answered "no" are added to those which are helping only ministerial students, it is clear that almost 50% of the colleges are getting no help for the vast majority of their students.

Q. 8. Are there any cooperative enterprises sponsored jointly by your college and the general board of education? Describe.

To this question, 84 colleges answered "no." This was 57%. From those answering in the affirmative, we get varied projects described. Here again religious emphasis week is listed in some 14 schools as a joint enterprise. Also joint publicity for the colleges and joint financial campaigns and surveys are cited as areas of cooperation. Youth organization, conferences and camps also are co-sponsored. In a few schools the Bible chair is maintained through financial cooperation between the college and the general board. There seems to be no general pattern followed by general boards in this area, and in some situations it is being neglected or ignored.

Q. 9. Do any professors of your college teach leadership education courses in local churches? Hold Bible Conferences?

All of the colleges except 7 answered this in the affirmative. A few of these modified this "yes" by adding "occasionally" or "sometimes," but an overwhelming majority indicated that certain professors give leadership to local churches through leadership courses and Bible conferences.

Q. 10a. What courses in Bible and religious education are offered by your college?

The answer to this question cannot be tabulated by percentage very easily, but it does indicate very definite trends. It can be said that the average college surveyed gives from 8 to 10 courses in Bible and religious education. Some schools offer many more, having 20 to 30 courses in all; some offer fewer, having only two or three listed. Practically every institution offers a survey of the Old Testament and the New Testament, the life of Christ, and a course on the Prophets. Most of them have a survey course in the philosophy of religious education. It seems probable that most of these colleges have not given careful study to their curriculum in religion recently.

b. How many hours of work in religious education are required?

Many of those who answered the questionnaire were confused at this point and did not seem to understand the difference between religious education and Bible. However, after careful study of this answer in relation to the other sections of question 10, it seems clear that at least 176 of these colleges definitely do not require any course in religious education for graduation. Some of these and most of the others require Bible or religious education; but it seems likely that if the accurate picture could be gotten that less than 15 schools out of the total of 207 actually require a regular student to take a single course in religious education.



c. What courses are required in religious education?

The answer to this question showed the confusion in the minds of some who listed courses in Old Testament and New Testament in answer to this inquiry about religious education. Only 5 colleges listed an actual course in religious education as a requirement. It is interesting to note that practically none of the colleges consider any course in religious education either in principles or techniques of enough importance to require it. Only 5 colleges out of 207 do. An insight into why this may be true is given by one college which said that the seminaries do not want religious education majors. Another college described a program demanding religious education which they had abandoned because of its unpopularity.

d. How many students elect religious education as a major compared with elections in other fields?

At this point the confusion in terminology between "Bible" and "religious education" makes it impossible to formulate accurate findings. Those answering so often included Bible majors in their estimate of the number as shown by their answers to other sections of this question that there is no way of knowing when they are referring actually to religious education majors and when not. It seems, however, as the answers to this are studied in the light of answers to other sections of this question that few are majoring in religious education in any of the colleges.

e. How many hours of Bible are required?

Only 14 colleges reported that no Bible is required. Some few require only one three-hour course, but the majority demand six or eight hours in Bible for graduation. A few have their requirements as high as sixteen or twenty hours of Bible study for each student graduating.

f. What courses are required?

In some schools the students may elect whatever courses they wish to meet the Bible requirements. The majority of colleges, however, require either Old Testament, New Testament, or the life of Christ, or require two of these or all three. A few require a course on the history of their denomination, and some a course on the Prophets.

Q. 11. What relationship does the college have with local churches?

The answer to this inquiry indicates that in only a few instances is there a formal tie-up between the college and the local churches. However, the unofficial relationship is very cooperative and cordial in most instances. Presidents and faculties teach, preach, and lead in the churches; students attend and participate; ministers cooperate with faculties and students. The spirit in almost every situation indicates a cooperative and cordial relationship. Only four answered "none" to this question.

Q. 12. What is your college doing to help relate students and the local churches?

The response at this point indicates goodwill, but not a great deal of good planning. The range of answers includes the whole gamut from "everything possible" to "not much." The majority testify that they urge the students to attend and at least 12 require attendance - some of these are junior colleges for girls. Activities by students in the church program

is urged by many schools and some have deputation and gospel teams and planned field work. Many colleges have the ministers of the various denominations to speak in their chapel and some send lists of names of students to the pastor of the denominational church to which they belong. Buses are provided by a few colleges and organizations and Sunday school classes are made available. One of the most interesting statements was that "the faculty set the example." About 25 colleges indicate that they have a carefully organized program to help establish this relationship between the students and the local churches. Careful planning and conscious effort is not evidenced in most situations, however.

Q. 13. Does the college consciously seek to develop lay leadership for local churches? In what way?

Only 14 1/2% (30 colleges) answered by saying "no" or leaving this blank, that they do not consciously seek to develop leadership. The other 85 1/2% (177 colleges) replied that they are seeking to develop lay leadership which is a very encouraging answer until an analysis of the replies to the second half of the question is made. This indicates that the program in most colleges to develop lay leadership is rather haphazard and inadequate. When describing this program a good many indicated that their only plan was by a "class," or by "encouragement," or by "participation" in a church or church school, or by a "prayer group," or "by example," or by a "lecture series." Some colleges, however, describe a program that includes several of these as well as careful personal counseling. The impression left upon one studying these answers is that the school officials hope that the students may be receiving guidance toward lay leadership but in very few cases has there been careful study evolved into a constructive program to achieve this purpose.

Q. 14. Does the college consciously seek to develop young ministers? In what way?

Since there were some schools for women included in the survey, not all the colleges could answer this question. From one women's college did come the reply that they were trying to develop good wives for young ministers and had been rather successful. Twenty-three colleges left this question unanswered and 16 answered it in the negative. However, when the women's colleges have been omitted the indications are that between 85% and 90% of the colleges do seek to develop young ministers. This is done primarily through counseling, encouragement, and financial aids (scholarships or loans). The indications are that most of the schools have a good program for those students who have already decided for the ministry, but are rather inadequate in helping others make this decision.

Q. 15. Have there been any conferences between representatives of your college and the general board of education to discuss closer cooperation in training to serve local church needs? Describe.

Thirty-one per cent (65 colleges) answered this in the affirmative. The other 69% failed to answer it or replied "no." The descriptions where such conferences have been held are not adequate to reveal much of them, but the answers to the question as a whole shows clearly that little has been done in this area.

Q. 16. What other relationships not listed above does your college have with the general board of education?

Most of the answers (67%) were either "none" or left blank, but several indicated that the college president was a member of the board, or that the general board helped in the annual religious emphasis week or that the board maintained a teacher placement bureau. In one or two colleges the general board nominates the college president. Visitation by staff, communication by letter and public relations service were listed rather often also.

Q. 17. In what other ways could your general board of education be of service to you?

Almost 56½% (117 colleges) failed to answer this question, or answered "none" indicating they did not want any closer cooperation. The answers from the other 43½% show various needs such as a desire for more financial aid and help with financial campaigns, help in publicity for the colleges, and solicitation of students, as well as teacher placement bureaus. Several colleges want help in curriculum planning and counseling, but are rather emphatic in believing this should be done by an authority in the field and that the Boards should have experts in such fields as curriculum, finance, publicity, and recruiting. More visitation and closer cooperation is desired by many colleges.

#### CONCLUSION

The findings of this survey indicates that there is a cordial relationship in most places between general boards of education and denominational colleges and between these colleges and local churches. However, the majority of general boards are not helping their colleges at many places where help is needed; and most colleges do not consciously and intelligently relate their students to local churches nor do the colleges usually consciously and intelligently select and develop future leaders in religion or religious education, either lay or clerical. These failures do not seem to be failures in desire or goodwill, but rather failures in insight and vision of planning and procedure in carrying out this important function of their task. This is true of both the general boards and the colleges.



Abilene Christian College, Abilene, Texas  
 Adrian College, Adrian, Michigan  
 Albright College, Reading, Pennsylvania  
 Alderson-Broadbudd College, Philippi, W. Va.  
 Allegheny College, Meadville, Pa.  
 Alma College, Alma, Michigan  
 Andrew College, Cuthbert, Georgia  
 Arkansas College, Batesville, Arkansas  
 Ashland College, Ashland, Ohio  
 Athens College, Athens, Alabama  
 Augustana College, Sioux Falls, S. D.  
 Austin College, Sherman, Texas  
 Averett College, Danville, Virginia

Bacone College, Bacone, Oklahoma  
 Baldwin-Wallace College, Berea, Ohio  
 Baylor College, Belton, Texas  
 Baylor University, Waco, Texas  
 Bessie Tift College, Forsyth, Georgia  
 Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas  
 Bethany Lutheran H.S. and Junior College,  
 Mankato, Minnesota  
 Bethany - Peniel College, Bethany, Okla.  
 Bethel College, McKenzie, Tennessee  
 Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas  
 Bluefield College, Bluefield, Va.  
 Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Miss.  
 Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio  
 Boulware Bettis Academy, Trenton, S.C.  
 Bridgewater College, Bridgewater, Va.  
 Brothens College, Drew Univ., Madison, N.J.  
 Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pa.  
 Buena Vista College, Storm Lake, Iowa

Campbell College, Buieo Creek, N. C.  
 Campbellsville College, Campbellsville, Ky.  
 Capital University, Columbus, Ohio  
 Carson Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn.  
 Carthage College, Carthage, Illinois  
 Cedar Crest College, Allentown, Pa.  
 Central College, McPherson, Kansas  
 Central College, Pella, Iowa  
 Chapman College, Los Angeles, Calif.  
 Clifton Junior College, Clifton, Texas  
 Coker College, Hartsville, S. Carolina  
 College of Emoria, Emoria, Kansas  
 College of Idaho, Caldwell, Idaho  
 College of the Ozarks, Clarksville, Ark.  
 College of the Pacific, Stockton, Calif.  
 Colorado Woman's College, Denver, Colo.  
 Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota  
 Concordia Theo. Seminary, Springfield, Ill.  
 Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa  
 Culver-Stockton College, Canton, Missouri

Dakota Wesleyan Univ., Mitchell, S.D.  
 Dana College, Blair, Nebraska  
 Davidson College, Davidson, N. Car.  
 Davis and Elkins College, Elkins, W. Va.  
 Decatur Baptist College, Decatur, Tex.  
 Defiance College, Defiance, Ohio  
 Denison Univ., Granville, Ohio  
 Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa.  
 Doane College, Crete, Nebraska

Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisburg, Va.  
 Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pa.  
 Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, Illinois  
 Emory and Henry College, Emory, Va.  
 Erskine College, Due West, S. Carolina  
 Evansville College, Evansville, Ind.

Franklin College, Franklin, Indiana  
 Flora Macdonald College, Red Springs, N.C.  
 Franklin and Marshall College,  
 Lancaster, Pa.  
 Furman University, Greenville, S. Car.

Gardner Webb College, Boiling Springs,  
 No. Carolina  
 General Assembly's Training School for  
 Lay Workers, Richmond, Virginia  
 Georgetown College, Georgetown, Ky.  
 Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa.  
 Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana  
 Greensboro College, Greensboro, N. C.  
 Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter,  
 Minnesota.

Hampden-Sydney, Hampden-Sydney, Virgin-  
 ia.  
 Hannibal-La Grange College, Hannibal,  
 Missouri.  
 Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana  
 Hardin-Simmons Univ., Abilene, Texas  
 Harding College, Searcy, Arkansas  
 Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York  
 Hastings College, Hastings, Nebraska  
 Hesston College, Hesston, Kansas  
 Hiwassee College, Madisonville, Tenn.  
 Hood College, Frederick, Maryland  
 Hope College, Holland, Michigan  
 Howard College, Birmingham, Alabama  
 Huntington College, Huntington, Indiana  
 Huntington College, Montgomery, Ala.  
 Huron College, Huron, South Dakota

Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Illinois



Jamestown College, Jamestown, N. Dakota  
 Jarvis Christian College, Hawkins, Texas  
 Judson College, Marion, Alabama  
 Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pa.

Kansas Wesleyan University, Salina, Kansas  
 Kentucky Wesleyan College, Winchester, Ky.

Lafayette College, Easton, Pa.  
 LaGrange College, La Grange, Georgia  
 LaVerne College, La Verne, Calif.  
 Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk, N. Car.  
 Leland College, Baker, Louisiana  
 Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory, N. Carolina  
 Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon  
 Lindenwood College, St. Charles, Mo.  
 Linfield College, McMinnville, Oregon  
 David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tenn.  
 Lon Morris College, Jacksonville, Texas  
 Louisiana College, Pineville, Louisiana  
 Luther College, Decorah, Iowa  
 Luther College, Wahoo, Nebraska  
 Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, Virginia

McPherson College, McPherson, Kansas

Manchester College, N. Manchester, Indiana  
 Marion College, Marion, Indiana  
 Marion College, Marion, Virginia  
 Mars Hill Junior College, Mars Hill, N. C.  
 Martin College, Pulaski, Tennessee  
 Maryville College, Maryville, Tenn.  
 Mercer University, Macon, Georgia  
 Meredith College, Raleigh, N. Carolina  
 Messiah Bible College, Grantham, Pa.  
 Midland College, Fremont, Nebraska  
 Miles College, Birmingham, Alabama  
 Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi  
 Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss.  
 Missouri Valley College, Marshall, Missouri  
 Mitchell College, Statesville, N. Carolina  
 Monmouth College, Monmouth, Illinois  
 Moravian College for Women, Bethlehem, Pa.  
 Morningside College, Sioux City, Iowa  
 Mt. Greta Camp Meeting Assoc., Annville, Pa.  
 Mt. Union College, Alliance, Ohio

Nebraska Wesleyan Univ., Lincoln, Nebraska  
 Newberry College, Newberry, So. Carolina  
 Norman Junior College, Norman Park, Ga.  
 North Central College, Naperville, Ill.  
 North Greenville Baptist Academy and Junior  
 College, Tigerville, South Carolina  
 Northwest Nazarene College, Nampa, Idaho

Oklahoma Bapt. Univ., Shawnee, Okla.  
 Olivet Nazarene College, Kankakee, Ill.  
 Ottawa University, Ottawa, Kansas  
 Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio

Pacific Lutheran College, Parkland,  
 Washington

Paine College, Augusta, Georgia  
 Park College, Parkville, Missouri  
 Parsons College, Fairfield, Iowa  
 Pasadena College, Pasadena, California  
 Peace College, Raleigh, North Carolina  
 Pfeiffer Junior College, Misenheimer, O.  
 Pikeville College, Pikeville, Kentucky  
 Presbyterian Junior College for Men,  
 Maxton, North Carolina

Queens College, Charlotte, N. Carolina

Randolph-Macon, Ashland, Virginia  
 Rio Grande College, Rio Grande, Ohio

St. Mary's School Junior College,  
 Raleigh, N. Carolina

St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota  
 Salem College, Winston-Salem, N. Car.  
 Salem College, Salem, West Virginia  
 Schreiner Institute, Kerrville, Texas  
 Seattle Pacific College, Seattle, Wash.  
 Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa  
 Snead Junior College, Boaz, Alabama  
 Spartanburg Junior College, Spartanburg,  
 S. Carolina

Southwest Baptist College, Bolivar, Mo.  
 Southern Christian Institute, Edwards,  
 Mississippi

Southwestern College of the Mississippi  
 Valley, Memphis, Tennessee

Southwestern University, Georgetown, Tex.  
 Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte,  
 North Carolina

Sterling College, Sterling, Kansas  
 John B. Stetson University, DeLand, Fla.  
 Stillman Institute, Tuscaloosa, Alabama  
 Susquehanna University, Selinogrove, Pa.

Tarkio College, Tarkio, Missouri  
 Tennessee College for Women, Murfrees-  
 boro, Tennessee

Tennessee Wesleyan, Athens, Tennessee  
 Texas College, Tyler, Texas  
 Texas Lutheran College, Seguin, Texas  
 Texas Wesleyan College, Fort Worth, Tex.  
 Thiel College, Greenville, Pa.  
 Trevecca Nazarene College, Nashville,  
 Tennessee



Jamestown College, Jamestown, N. Dakota  
Jarvis Christian College, Hawkins, Texas  
Judson College, Marion, Alabama  
Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pa.

Kansas Wesleyan University, Salina, Kansas  
Kentucky Wesleyan College, Winchester, Ky.

Lafayette College, Easton, Pa.  
LaGrange College, La Grange, Georgia  
LaVerne College, La Verne, Calif.  
Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk, N. Car.  
Leland College, Baker, Louisiana  
Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory, N. Carolina  
Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon  
Lindenwood College, St. Charles, Mo.  
Linfield College, McMinnville, Oregon  
David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tenn.  
Lon Morris College, Jacksonville, Texas  
Louisiana College, Pineville, Louisiana  
Luther College, Decorah, Iowa  
Luther College, Wahoo, Nebraska  
Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, Virginia

McPherson College, McPherson, Kansas

Manchester College, N. Manchester, Indiana  
Marion College, Marion, Indiana  
Marion College, Marion, Virginia  
Mars Hill Junior College, Mars Hill, N. C.  
Martin College, Pulaski, Tennessee  
Maryville College, Maryville, Tenn.  
Mercer University, Macon, Georgia  
Meredith College, Raleigh, N. Carolina  
Messiah Bible College, Grantham, Pa.  
Midland College, Fremont, Nebraska  
Miles College, Birmingham, Alabama  
Millsaps College, Jackson, Mississippi  
Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss.  
Missouri Valley College, Marshall, Missouri  
Mitchell College, Statesville, N. Carolina  
Monmouth College, Monmouth, Illinois  
Moravian College for Women, Bethlehem, Pa.  
Morningside College, Sioux City, Iowa  
Mt. Gretna Camp Meeting Assoc., Annville, Pa.  
Mt. Union College, Alliance, Ohio

Nebraska Wesleyan Univ., Lincoln, Nebraska  
Newberry College, Newberry, S. Carolina  
Norman Junior College, Norman Park, Ga.  
North Central College, Naperville, Ill.  
North Greenville Baptist Academy and Junior  
College, Tigerville, South Carolina  
Northwest Nazarene College, Nampa, Idaho

Oklahoma Bapt. Univ., Shawnee, Okla.  
Olivet Nazarene College, Kankakee, Ill.  
Ottawa University, Ottawa, Kansas  
Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio

Pacific Lutheran College, Parkland,  
Washington

Paine College, Augusta, Georgia  
Park College, Parkville, Missouri  
Parsons College, Fairfield, Iowa  
Pasadena College, Pasadena, California  
Peace College, Raleigh, North Carolina  
Pfeiffer Junior College, Missenheimer, O.  
Pikeville College, Pikeville, Kentucky  
Presbyterian Junior College for Men,  
Maxton, North Carolina

Queens College, Charlotte, N. Carolina

Randolph-Macon, Ashland, Virginia  
Rio Grande College, Rio Grande, Ohio

St. Mary's School Junior College,  
Raleigh, N. Carolina

St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota  
Salem College, Winston-Salem, N. Car.  
Salem College, Salem, West Virginia  
Schreiner Institute, Kerrville, Texas  
Seattle Pacific College, Seattle, Wash.  
Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa  
Snead Junior College, Boaz, Alabama  
Spartanburg Junior College, Spartan-  
burg, S. Carolina

Southwest Baptist College, Bolivar, Mo.  
Southern Christian Institute, Edwards,  
Mississippi

Southwestern College of the Mississippi  
Valley, Memphis, Tennessee

Southwestern University, Georgetown, Tex.  
Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte,  
North Carolina

Sterling College, Sterling, Kansas  
John B. Stetson University, DeLand, Fla.  
Stillman Institute, Tuscaloosa, Alabama  
Susquehanna University, Selinogrove, Pa.

Tarkio College, Tarkio, Missouri  
Tennessee College for Women, Murfrees-  
boro, Tennessee

Tennessee Wesleyan, Athens, Tennessee  
Texas College, Tyler, Texas  
Texas Lutheran College, Seguin, Texas  
Texas Wesleyan College, Fort Worth, Tex.  
Thiel College, Greenville, Pa.  
Trevecca Nazarene College, Nashville,  
Tennessee



Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas

Union University, Jackson, Tennessee

University of Denver, Denver, Colorado

University of Dubuque, Dubuque, Iowa

University of Redlands, Redlands, Calif.

University of Richmond, Richmond, Va.

Upsala College, East Orange, New Jersey

Virginia Intermont College, Bristol, Va.

Virginia Theological Seminary and

College, Lynchburg, Virginia

Wagner College, Staten Island, New York

Waldorf College, Forest City, Iowa

Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa

Wayland College, Plainview, Texas

Waynesburg College, Waynesburg, Pa.

Western Maryland College, Westminster, Md.

Western Union College, La Mars, Iowa

Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa.

Westminster College, Salt Lake City, Utah

Willamette University, Salem, Oregon

William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.

Winebrenner Graduate School of Divinity,

Findlay College, Findlay, Ohio

Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio

Wofford College, Spartanburg, S. Carolina

York College, York, Nebraska

Young Harris College, Young Harris, Ga.

### DENOMINATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

African Methodist Episcopal	1	Moravian	2
American Lutheran	4	Nazarene	5
Associate Reformed	1	Negro Baptist	2
Augustana Lutheran	3	Negro Presbyterian	2
Brethren in Christ	1	Northern Baptist	9
Church of Brethren	7	Norwegian Lutheran	5
Church of Christ	3	Presbyterian, U. S.	14
Church of God	1	Presbyterian, U. S. A.	21
Colored Methodist Episcopal	1	Reformed	2
Congregational Christian	2	Seventh Day Baptists	1
Cumberland Presbyterian	1	Southern Baptist	35
Disciples of Christ	5	United Brethren	3
Episcopal	1	United Brethren in Christ	
Evangelical	3	(Old Constl.)	1
Evangelical Lutheran	4	United Lutheran	9
Evangelical and Reformed	4	United Presbyterian	4
Mennonite	5	Wesley Methodist	1
Methodist Church	38	Colored Methodist	1
Missionary Baptist	1	Free Methodist	2
Missouri Synod Lutheran	2	TOTAL	207

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FINDINGS FROM QUESTIONNAIRES  
SENT TO GENERAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION CONCERNING THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO  
THEIR COLLEGES

Questionnaires were sent to 40 denominational boards; replies were received from 21 boards (52½%). These replies are revealing of general relationships, but at many points one could wish for more specific information.

- Q. 1. Does your general board of education have a special program of work with the colleges of your church? Describe.

Fourteen boards reported that they do have a special program for their colleges; the others say that they do not have such a program, or that there is very little program and it has not yet been developed to a point where it functions effectively. Those reporting a program included public relations, financial help, counseling on administration, help in program building, student programs, and teacher placement bureaus. In several denominations there seems to be a well-planned and carried out program; in most of the others, however, this does not seem to be true.

- Q. 2. If a staff member has primary responsibility for working with the colleges of your church, please give his name and address.

Nine boards reported that they have no one of special responsibility for working with the colleges. Those reporting special persons in many cases have listed the executive secretary of the board of education who has this along with other duties. In a few of the larger denominations, however, there seem to be large staffs who work primarily with the colleges. Names were listed by 12 boards.

- Q. 3. Does the general board give any help in planning any part of the curriculum for the colleges? Explain.

One-third of the boards answered that they do not give any help in planning the college curriculum. Five other boards said that their relation was only advisory. Two others replied that their help was on certain courses, such as religious education and Bible. The answers would indicate that the colleges in many denominations do turn to their general board for advice and help at certain times in planning their curriculum.

- Q. 4a. Do staff members of the general board visit the colleges in behalf of the board? How often?

Six boards answered that they did not have staff members visiting campuses, and some of those boards do not have paid staff to carry on such visitation.

- b. Do staff members meet any classes in the college during the year, either as teachers or as resource persons? How many staff members do this? In how many colleges?

Eight of the boards reported that they make visits at least annually to the campuses of their colleges. It seems that it is not the practice in most colleges for the staff member of the general board to meet any classes either as a teacher or resource person. However, this is done by six of the denominational boards.

c. State the nature of other services in each college.

Eleven boards reported that they do not render any other services to their colleges. The other ten reported some service, including addresses to the student body, meeting the faculty, student interviews, summer programs, counselling on faculty and finances and administration, and public relations.

The answers to Question 4 indicate visitation to the campuses by board staff members, but does not reveal any great program of service which may be rendered.

Q. 5. Does the general board have any relationships to students of the colleges? Explain.

Nine general boards reported that they do not have any relationships to students within the colleges. It may be that some of these have overlooked the student program and should not have answered this in the negative. The twelve boards which reported some program more often referred to scholarships and loans than anything else. However, a number spoke of their student program and conferences, service projects, and summer work. It seems that this is a point where further study needs to be made to find out just what is being done and what is not being done for students by denominational boards.

Q. 6. Does the general board have any relationship to students of your denomination in state and independent colleges and universities? Explain.

Here again nine boards reported no help or program for students in independent colleges and universities. Twelve reported such a program and included in this are Bible chairs, university preachers, visitation and contacts, financial help, and student program. It is interesting to note that certain boards reported in the affirmative on Question 6, but in the negative on Question 5. This seems to be inaccurate, but if it is true, a rethinking of the board program is definitely indicated.

Q. 7. Does the general board conduct any special enterprises at your colleges? If so, describe the activities.

Thirteen boards either failed to answer this or answered it in the negative. The eight which did give an affirmative reply included in their description of the activities: finances for religious emphasis speakers, students' conferences, vocational institutes, leadership schools, etc.

Q. 8. What aid do the colleges seek from the general board?  
a. Financial

Nine boards reported that the colleges do not seek any financial aid from them. The other twelve boards reported that they give some help or furnish financial agents, or recommend apportionments, or supply the general budget. There seems to be no pattern followed by various denominational groups.

b. Advisory

Eight boards declared that the colleges do not seek advisory help from them. Three others said that this is done at times, and the other



nine reported that the colleges do seek such help.

c. Teaching service

Only seven boards reported that they offer teacher service to the colleges. This is in the form of a teacher placement bureau in several of the denominations.

d. Other service

Fifteen boards said that there are no additional services which the colleges seek. Several of the others listed financial help, visitation, counseling, and public relations as areas where help is sought.

- Q. 9. Does the general board supply the library or professors of religious education or the students with booklets and materials concerning the denomination's program of religious education? Describe.

Eleven boards reported that they do not furnish the library, the professors of religious education, or the students with the booklets and manuals of the denominational board of education. Several others said that they do it to a limited degree or upon request. Only two boards answered this completely in the affirmative. This would indicate that most denominational boards have not felt this of sufficient importance to carry it out.

- Q. 10. Have there been any conferences between representatives of the general board and of the colleges to discuss more effective pre-seminary training and better preparation for effective lay leadership? Describe results.

Thirteen boards reported that there have been certain conferences to discuss more effective pre-seminary training and better preparation for effective lay leadership. Some of these said that it was several years ago, and others indicated that such conferences have not been frequent. Those answering "yes" did not give enough detail to draw any conclusion, but at this point, there seems to have been cooperative planning.

- Q. 11. Do you consider graduates of your colleges well trained for lay leadership in local churches? Do they know the program and organization?

In answer to this question, the vast majority of the boards replied that they do not think that the graduates of their denominational colleges are well trained for local church leadership. Only two replied in the affirmative. Several said that in certain schools they were; in other schools they were not. The answers, however, indicate that those filling out these questionnaires feel that students are not leaving the colleges equipped to take on local church leadership responsibility.

- Q. 12. How can the colleges better train for membership and leadership in local churches?

Seven boards answered this question by saying that they do not know, or by failing to answer at all. Among the answers which were received most frequently were: "stronger faculty"; "more religious at-

mosphere"; "full-time director of religious life"; "clear tie-up with local church pastors"; "more practical courses"; "more required courses"; "well-planned participation in field work"; "counseling, guidance, and encouragement."

- Q. 13. Do you feel that attendance at one of your denomination's colleges increases a person's interest in the church and his service to it? What condition in the college makes for this result?

It is interesting to note that although it was not felt that the colleges were turning out well-trained leaders for local churches, yet two-thirds of those answering this question believe that something in the college atmosphere and through the relationship of faculty and classes increases a personal interest in the church by attending a denominational college. Only seven boards failed to answer this, or answered it in the affirmative. Some remarks which threw light on the thinking of those answering this question are: "depends on home"; "if faculty is Christian"; "where students are active." The majority of the denominational boards represented are definitely leaning toward attendance of denominational colleges for creation of interest in students.

- Q. 14. How can general boards of education help make more efficient and more Christian the influence and training in church colleges and universities?

Here again one-third of the boards did not try to answer this question. Others answering it listed stronger faculty, stronger student program, university pastors, cooperative program between colleges and local church and general boards, careful choice of trustees and administrator, and opportunities for Christian service provided for college students.

#### CONCLUSION

It may be said that in approximately one-half of the denominations there is some type of cooperative program between the general board of education and the colleges. In certain other situations there are cooperative enterprises, but in at least two-thirds of the denominations reporting, the plan seems to be inadequate and usually lacks a general program of cooperation between the general board of education and the denominational colleges. This indicates a need for a new study of the relationships, of the mutual responsibilities, and of the possibilities of strengthening both programs through well-planned cooperation.

GENERAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

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REPLYING

(COLLEGES)

American Lutheran Church, Board of Christian Higher Education  
Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Board of Parish Education

Church of the Brethren, Board of Christian Education

Church of God, Board of Christian Education

Churches of God in North America, General Eldership Board of  
Education

Church of the Nazarene

Congregational Christian Churches, Division of Christian Education

Disciples of Christ, Division of Christian Education

Evangelical Church, Board of Christian Education

Evangelical and Reformed Church, Board of Christian Education  
and Publication

National Baptist Convention, U.S.A. (Inc.), Department of  
Religious Education

Northern Baptist Convention, Board of Education and Publication

The Methodist Church, Board of Education

Presbyterian Church in U.S., Committee of Religious Education  
and Publication

Presbyterian Church in U.S.A., Board of Christian Education

Protestant Episcopal, Division of Christian Education, National  
Council

Reformed Church in America, Board of Education

United Brethren in Christ, Board of Christian Education

United Church of Canada, Board of Christian Education

United Lutheran Church in America, Board of Education

United Presbyterian Church, Board of Christian Education



## FINDINGS FROM QUESTIONNAIRES SENT TO DENOMINATIONAL SEMINARIES

Questionnaires were sent in the name of the International Council of Religious Education to 61 seminaries. Of these, replies were received from 53 seminaries (87%) an unusually fine percentage.

The difficulties faced by those answering the questionnaire were numerous. Certain denominations do not have a general board of education in the sense it is used in the questionnaire. Many denominations have a board of higher education and a Sunday school or local church board with little or no relationship one to the other. The questionnaire assumed at least a close relationship or even unity. Another element of difficulty was a lack of recognition for a conference, state, or synod's relationship to the seminary. Certain questions were not explicit enough to be clearly understood.

As always, there was the difficulty of different personal attitudes and pre-determined ideas entering into the answers and coloring them. Another element was the little time that was given, it seems by most persons to think through the answers and so sometimes obviously they are incomplete. Incomplete as the results are, certain attitudes, conditions, and trends are yet discernible and worthy of study.

Q. 1. Does your seminary have a close relationship to your denomination's general board of education? Describe.

Seven seminaries reported that they have no general board of education; 23 reported a close relationship; 10 indicated the relationship is "fair"; and 13 replied "no". This means that 50% consider the relationship as close, while 28% definitely do not. In some situations the board has jurisdiction over the seminary, but in the majority of denominations the two are separate and many who replied that the relation was close, hastened to add that each was autonomous.

Q. 2. What services are rendered your seminary by your general board?

Slightly over 20% (11 seminaries) either answered "none" or failed to answer this question. Almost 80% replied that they did receive certain services. The services rendered most often by the boards are in the realm of finance, visitation, and advice or counsel. For many seminaries denominational literature is furnished, and in some, staff members of the board teach short courses or act as resource persons in certain classes for a limited time.

Q. 3. Does the program of religious education taught in your seminary include instruction on the program and procedure of religious education of your denomination as promoted by your general board of education?

Fifty-two seminaries answered this inquiry, and of this number, 48 were in the affirmative, which is 90%. Three replied "some" or "partially" and two said that they do not teach their denomination's program of religious education. If this be an accurate statement, then in many cases, it seems that students have been slow to learn or have failed to take such courses, for many seminary graduates do not seem to have this information.

- Q. 4. Do you use staff members of your general board of education as consultants in planning any part of your seminary curriculum?

Approximately 52% (27 seminaries) answered this question in the negative. The other 48% gave a reply in the affirmative, but the consultation ranges all the way from "rarely," to "on courses in religious education," to "all changes of curriculum must have board of education approval." It would seem that in possibly 30% of the seminaries, board advice is of importance in planning the curriculum.

- Q. 5. Do you use staff members of your general boards of education for any teaching in classes or as resource persons for classes?

The answers to this question show that in 23 seminaries (44%) board staff members are not used in classes. In some denominations the staff is not full time or not large enough to render such service. Fourteen seminaries reported that this was done occasionally, and 15 (29%) replied in the affirmative, which gives indication that it is a regular practice.

- Q. 6. Do you have in your library, available to the students, the booklets and manuals on religious education published by your general board of education?

Two seminaries reported that there are no such materials. Five reported that they have some of them in their library. Forty-six out of the 53 replied "yes." This indicates that denominational manuals are available to students desiring to use them.

- Q. 7. Does your general board of education have any program for or give any help to students in your seminary? What help does it give?

The large part of the help given students by the general boards seems to be financial. Twenty seminaries (38%) report no help for the students. Of the 32 (61%) that reported help, 24 of them indicated that this help was financial. In some seminaries the aid was only financial, but in others this was but one of several points at which the student's life was touched. At least one denominational board brings some students to its headquarters for a visit. Others direct field work or give counsel to the students.

- Q. 8. Are there any cooperative enterprises sponsored jointly by your seminary and your general board of education?

This question was answered in the negative by 57½% (30) of the seminaries. The other 42½% cooperate in many different ways. Special courses are reported by a number of schools. Summer programs and field work are cooperative enterprises in some places, and in others it is a publicity program or recruiting for the ministry.

- Q. 9. Do professors in your seminary teach leadership education courses in local churches? Hold Bible conferences? Render other services?

Every seminary reports that their professors do teach leadership courses and teach in Bible conferences.

Q. 10a. What courses in religious education are offered in your seminary?

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This question was answered with a deluge of catalogs as many of those answering felt that there were too many courses to list. The majority of the seminaries show a rather extended program in religious education, although a few list only one or two courses. Courses that seem to be offered most are Organization and Administration of Religious Education, Principles of Religious Education, Philosophy of Religious Education, and Curriculum. The average number of courses offered each year seems to be from five to ten. Some seminaries offer many more.

b. How many hours of work are required in religious education?

Only one seminary reported no work required in this field. Eighteen schools require from one to four hours, and the majority of the others demand six or eight hours of religious education.

c. What courses are required in religious education?

About one-fourth of the seminaries do not demand any specific course. Others require mostly the Educational Work of the Church, Organization and Administration, and Principles of Religious Education.

d. How many students elect religious education as a major compared with the elections in other fields?

Twenty seminaries said that they do not have majors, or left this question unanswered. Of the remaining 33, ten declared that 10% or less majored in religious education. Twenty-three seminaries reported the percentage of majors as above 10%. In most of these it seems that religious education falls behind the Biblical and historical fields in number of majors.

Q. 11. Is there supervised field work in religious education in your seminary? Please describe the activities?

Thirty-five (66%) of the seminaries answered this affirmatively. Many others answered that their field work was not primarily in religious education. Only 5 seminaries answered in the negative, but it is impossible to say how thorough or adequate this field work is.

Q. 12. What other field work is offered in your seminary?

All but two seminaries reported additional field work. It includes student pastorates, pastor's assistants, church school work, youth work, settlement house and social work. Several schools report a required year of internship either between the second and third year, or on completion of the three years.

Q. 13. What other relationships does the seminary have with local churches? Describe.

This question is answered primarily by listing things done by faculty and students in assisting a local church's program, such as preaching, teaching, singing, visiting, etc. Certain seminaries state that pastors of local churches teach certain courses in their seminary.



Q. 14. What courses are offered in your seminary which deal with the program of the local church?

This was a poorly phrased question, for in many cases the answer included thirty or forty courses. In smaller seminaries there are fewer courses and in some only two or three were listed. Most seminaries include courses in preaching, pastoral theology, church organization, etc. The answer does show that there is no consistent thinking on what courses are needed.

Q. 15. What other relationships not listed above does your seminary have with your general board of education?

More than 71½% (38) of the seminaries reported that there were no additional relationships. It is rather certain, however, that in many cases if the person answering the questionnaire had given more time and thought to it, other points would have been listed. The majority of those listing other areas included membership of the Board by certain seminary officials.

Q. 16. Have there been any conferences held recently between representatives of the seminary and your general board to discuss closer cooperation between seminary training and local church needs? What have been the results of these conferences?

Twenty-five seminaries reported a recent conference and a number more reported meetings either formal or informal in which both groups were represented. Twenty-one seminaries answered "no" or "none". This indicates that not more than one-half of the denominational boards and seminaries are planning jointly to meet their mutual problems.

Q. 17. In what other ways could your general board of education serve you?

Thirty of the 53 seminaries (56%) either failed to answer this question or answered it "none." Some of these indicated that they did not want further cooperation as it might endanger the autonomy of the seminary. Those suggesting further help desired, listed most often financial, recruiting ministers, information and standards of other seminaries, and cooperative projects. A number spoke in highly appreciative terms of the program as carried out by their general boards.

#### CONCLUSION

Although the questionnaire did not receive all the information that might have been desired, yet it did reveal certain conditions and trends. The relationship of general boards and seminaries is not in most situations a close working cooperation. They do not seem usually to have recognized their <sup>common</sup> responsibility to the students and to the churches which these students are serving and will serve. Without either group losing its autonomy, it seems that the seminaries and the general boards could do a much more constructive work if there were more unified planning and a keener realization of their common responsibility.

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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES REPLYING

Anderson College and Theological Seminary, Anderson, Indiana  
Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Massachusetts  
Augustana College and Theological Seminary, Rock Island, Illinois  
Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, Texas

Bangor Theological Seminary, Bangor, Maine  
Berkeley Baptist Divinity School, Berkeley, California  
Berkeley Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut  
Bethany Biblical Institute, Chicago, Illinois  
Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota  
Bloomfield College and Theological Seminary, Bloomfield, New Jersey  
The Bonebrake Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio  
Boston University School of Theology, Boston, Massachusetts

Candler School of Theology of Emory University, Emory, Georgia  
Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Kansas  
Chicago Lutheran Seminary, Maywood, Illinois  
The Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois  
Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, California  
Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, New York  
The College of the Bible, Lexington, Kentucky  
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri  
Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois  
Crozer Theological Seminary, Chester, Pennsylvania

Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey  
Duke Divinity School, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

The Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
The Evangelical Theological Seminary, Naperville, Illinois

Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Georgia

Iliff School of Theology, Denver, Colorado

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky  
Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota  
The Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa.

McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois  
Moravian College and Theological Seminary, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey  
Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois  
Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas  
The Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Presbyterian College of Christian Education, Chicago, Illinois  
Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey

San Francisco Theological Seminary, San Anselmo, California  
 Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois  
 The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky  
 Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas

Theological Seminary of the Evangelical and Reformed Church,  
 Lancaster, Pennsylvania  
 Theological Seminary of the Reformed Episcopal, Philadelphia,  
 Pennsylvania

Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia

Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, Virginia

Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa  
 Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
 Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan  
 Westminster Theological Seminary, Westminster, Maryland

#### DENOMINATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

American Lutheran Church	1
Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Synod	1
Church of the Brethren	1
Church of God	1
Congregational Christian Churches	2
Disciples of Christ	1
Evangelical Church	1
Evangelical and Reformed Church	1
The Methodist Church	8
Moravian Church in America	1
Missouri Lutheran Synod	2
Presbyterian in U. S.	3
Presbyterian in U. S. A.	6
Protestant Episcopal Church	5
Norwegian Lutheran	1
Northern Baptist Convention	8
Reformed Church	2
Reformed Episcopal	1
Southern Baptist Convention	2
United Brethren	1
United Lutheran	3
United Presbyterian	1
TOTAL	<u>53</u>



FINDINGS FROM QUESTIONNAIRES  
SENT TO GENERAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION CONCERNING THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO  
THEIR THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES

Questionnaires were sent in the name of the International Council of Religious Education to forty general boards of education. Replies were received from sixteen general boards, a 40% return, the smallest return which we had from any of the four questionnaires. Possibly the reason for this is that a number of denominations do not have theological seminaries as such; however, many denominations which do have them failed to reply.

As in the other questionnaires, certain difficulties arose in answering the questionnaires because of variance in terminology used by different denominations. Most replies, however, seemed to indicate that the questions were understood. The findings are quite revealing and verify the conclusions drawn from a study of the questionnaires sent to the theological seminaries.

- Q. 1. Does your general board of education have a special program of work with the seminaries of your church? If so, describe it.

Seven of the boards answered this question in the negative; nine answered it in the affirmative. The programs listed include supervision by the general board, membership of president of the seminary on the board, theological surveys, and financial assistance. Several boards answering "no" declared that there was cooperation, but that each was autonomous. It is certain that some answering "yes" could have said the same, so it seems that more than 50% of the boards do have some slight program for the theological seminaries.

- Q. 2. If a staff member has primary responsibility for working with the seminaries of your church, please give his name and address.

The names of eleven men who have special responsibility in working with the theological seminaries were listed. Some of these persons have only this responsibility; others are general secretaries and this is merely included among their other duties. It is hard to know exactly how many boards have a full-time employee working only with seminaries; likely very few.

- Q. 3. Does your general board give any help to seminaries in planning their curricula? Indicate what help it gives to each.

Seven boards answered that they give no help to the seminaries in planning curriculum. Three other boards replied that they give help on request. The others seemingly give only a minimum of counsel at this point. The planning of the curricula seems to be a function of the seminary in most instances.

- Q. 4a. Do staff members of your general board visit seminaries? How often?

Fifteen boards reported that staff members do visit in the seminaries. Most of these visits are made annually, but some as often as four times

- b. Do staff members meet any classes in the seminaries during the year either as teachers or as resource persons? How many staff members do this? In how many seminaries?

A majority of the boards reported that staff members do act as resource persons or teach certain classes for a limited time in the seminaries. This, however, does not seem to be a frequent nor a well-planned program. The limitation of the time of the staff member seems to be involved.

- c. State the nature of other services in each seminary.

Other services that are listed are: counselling of students and faculty, vacation school institute, chapel services, conferences with deans and professors, educational day, presentation of hymnals, etc.

The answers to the three parts of this question indicate that board members do visit the seminaries and do render some service in their visitation.

- Q. 5. Does your general board have any special relation to or cooperation with the students of your seminaries? Explain.

Six boards answered that there is no special relationship with the students in the seminaries. The other ten listed relationships including interviews and counselling, special courses and seminars and conferences, educational day, scholarships, and summer work.

- Q. 6. Does your general board have any relationship to students of your denomination in other seminaries? If so, describe the nature of this relationship in each seminary.

Nine seminaries reported that they have no relationship to students of their denomination in other seminaries. Two other seminaries reported very little is being done. Two others reported that plans are under way for this type of program. The others reported visitation, special courses, counselling and scholarships as evidence of their programs. Actually, there seems to be little done for students outside of their own seminaries.

- Q. 7. Does your general board conduct any special enterprises at your seminaries? If so, name the seminaries and describe the enterprises in each.

Eleven seminaries answered this in the negative; the others who do have joint enterprises, listed special courses, seminars, pastors' schools, leadership education courses, and occasional conferences. Indications are that in only one or two denominations is there a great deal being done in this realm.

- Q. 8. What aid do the seminaries seek from your general board?  
a. Financial

Seven seminaries receive financial aid from their general boards; another receives advice concerning financial matters; the other 50% do not receive aid of this type.

- b. Advisory

Seven seminaries receive aid of an advisory type, according 55  
to their reports; four others receive this aid upon request or in some  
special field, such as religious education. It would seem that the  
seminaries do not turn to the Boards for authentic professional advice.

c. Teaching service

This question was not clear, and therefore was left unanswered by a  
number of boards. Those answering it usually answered it in the negative,  
understanding the question to mean, "Do the boards furnish teachers for  
the seminaries?" One or two of those answering understood this to mean a  
teacher placement bureau sponsored by the board. The answers to this  
question do not give a clear picture because of this misunderstanding, but  
they show that likely there is no teacher placement bureaus in most boards  
and likely no teaching done by board members within the seminaries.

d. Other service

Twelve boards left this question blank or answered it "none." The  
other four boards answered, "chapel services, literature, and promotion."

The answers to the four parts of this question seem to show that the  
general boards do not usually serve the seminaries very effectively in  
these realms.

Q. 9. Does your general board have an "educational day" at the semi-  
inaries during the year? What are the usual features of it?

Here again the question may have been misunderstood, as only one  
board answered in the affirmative; the other fifteen answered "no." It  
may be, however, that in some other denominations that special days are  
held in seminaries when staff members of the general board of education  
present their denominational program.

Q. 10. Does your general board supply the libraries in the semi-  
naries or the professors of religious education or the  
students with booklets and manuals published by the board?  
Describe this service.

These boards gave a negative reply; six others replied that this was  
done on request or occasionally. So it seems that only in seven denomi-  
nations where the information is available are pamphlets and manuals sup-  
plied to students, professors, and libraries.

Q. 11. Is there supervised field work in religious education in  
your seminaries? Describe.

To this question seven replied in the negative; the other nine re-  
plied affirmatively. Actually most of the boards seem to have little  
understanding or knowledge of what is being done in the field work in  
the seminaries.

Q. 12. What courses are offered in your seminaries dealing with the  
program of the local church? List those for each institution.

Here again the general board may not have had an accurate picture of  
the conditions within the seminaries. At least four boards failed to an-  
swer this question, and the others usually answered it in rather vague  
terms.



However, it is certain that the boards for the most part believe that there are many courses concerning the program of the local church taught in their seminaries, and this is likely true.

- Q. 13. Have there been any conferences between representatives of your general board and of the seminaries to discuss closer cooperation between seminary training and local church needs? If so, what have been the results? Are any such conferences anticipated?

Fifty per cent of the boards replied that they have not had conferences with representatives of the seminaries; two others reported that such plans are now under way. Those reporting conferences indicate that it has brought closer cooperation and understanding between the seminaries and the general board. The indications are that this is a point where further cooperation may be explored.

- Q. 14. Indicate any other relationships not already mentioned, and especially any that bear on the local church.

Fourteen of the sixteen boards failed to answer this question, indicating that areas of cooperation had been covered. The Church of the Brethren answered that the seminaries of their denomination were increasingly meeting needs and indicated a growing cooperation between board and seminary. The Methodist Church listed several items in general, but the primary one being concerned with special planning and cooperation which is going on between staffmembers of the board of education and the seminaries.

#### CONCLUSION

The findings of this survey indicate that there is a rather nebulous relationship between many boards of education and their theological seminaries. It seems that a closer cooperation is possible and would be mutually beneficial.

## GENERAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

REPLYING  
(SEMINARIES)

American Lutheran Church, Board of Christian Higher Education  
Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Board of Parish Education

Church of the Brethren, Board of Christian Education  
Church of England in Canada, General Board of Religious Education  
Church of God, Board of Christian Education  
Congregational Christian Churches, Division of Christian Education

Disciples of Christ, Division of Christian Education

Evangelical Church, Board of Christian Education

The Methodist Church, Board of Education

Northern Baptist Convention, Board of Education and Publication

Presbyterian Church in U. S. A., Board of Christian Education  
Protestant Episcopal, Division of Christian Education, National  
Council

Reformed Church in America, Board of Education

United Brethren in Christ, Board of Christian Education  
United Lutheran Church in America, Board of Education  
United Presbyterian Church of North America, Board of Education

# THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## VII

### THE COMMUNITY APPROACH TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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The International Council of Religious Education

Prepared by  
THE COMMITTEE ON THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

And Presented to the  
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## PREFACE

This document is one of eight reports issued by the Committee on the Study of Christian Education to the International Council of Religious Education. The committee was established by Council action at the Annual Meeting in February, 1944, with Dr. Paul H. Vieth of the Yale University Divinity School as chairman, Dr. Nevin C. Harner, now President of Heidelberg College, as vice-chairman, and Dr. Gerald E. Knoff of the International Council staff as executive secretary.

The committee interpreted its task as that of presenting its final reports as independent findings, addressed to the Council rather than as reports which necessarily had to have Council approval. The Council found itself in complete agreement with this understanding and took specific action to that effect at the Annual Meeting of 1945.

Some of these reports were presented to the Council at the February 1946 Annual Meeting; others were presented in 1947. All of the documents have been presented to the International Council though they are not to be interpreted necessarily as the findings of the Council.

Some of the recommendations have been formally adopted by Council action; others have been received for study and later action, as will be shown in the minutes of the International Council for the Annual Meetings of 1946 and 1947.

The substance of the eight reports together with other interpretive material has been incorporated in more popular form in the book, The Church and Christian Education, by Paul H. Vieth, published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis, for the Cooperative Publishing Association. The price is \$2.50. This book is suitable for use by lay people, by volunteer church workers, and for classroom work, as well as by professional groups.

The titles in this series of Study Committee documents are as follows:

I	Christian Education, Yesterday and Today . . . . .	.25
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They may be purchased through the Business Department of the International Council of Religious Education, 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois, at the prices indicated.

It is the hope of the Committee on the Study of Christian Education that these reports may be helpful in stimulating a critical re-examination of our programs of religious education in order that we may be more skillful leaders of those committed to our charge and better teachers of the Gospel.

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## THE COMMUNITY APPROACH TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### I

#### FOREWORD

We are concerned in this document for the cooperative or corporate educational responsibilities of the churches in a specific geographical area. These corporate educational responsibilities have to do with effecting desirable changes in the life and structure of the community, but they have to do equally with effecting desirable changes in the life and character of the individuals who constitute the community.

While major attention will be given to the local community, it is recognized that there are larger county, city, state, national, and worldwide areas. The general principles of the approach under consideration are the same for any geographical area, and are to be found in the primary relationships of local churches to each other in the local community. Therefore, centering attention upon the local community should afford sound principles for larger geographical areas such as the county, city, or state.

The local church is of strategic importance in the corporate work of the churches. But here we shall stress those phases of the total program of Christian education in the community which the churches and denominations will carry on cooperatively through inter-church agencies, councils and federations of churches or of religious education.

Christian education must always be placed in the setting of the churches' total corporate tasks. The impression must not be given that Christian education is the only function of either local churches or inter-church and interdenominational agencies. It should be recognized that Christian education is not to be viewed as an isolated function but as only one emphasis in the churches' total strategy of service. The educational spirit and method should permeate the whole life of the church. In turn, Christian education should itself be permeated by the spirit and method of evangelism, worship, fellowship, social action, and service.

### II

#### THE NATURE OF THE COMMUNITY

The community furnishes the environment in which the effectiveness of religious education is tested. Always a vital force or entity, it has recently come to play a larger and more significant role in society. Particularly evident has been its increase in size, caused by improved transportation and communication, which permit the centralization of educational, social,

religious, economic, and civic services. The local community has also been subjected to a wide range of new influences which have made it less self-contained and more inter-related with area, regional, national, and world life.

For the purposes of this discussion the local community is to be understood as a limited geographical area in which persons and groups are living together, influencing each other, and recognizing certain degrees of interdependence. The community as an entity is both structural and functional, and provides people with face-to-face and other relationships. The existence and nature of the community are determined by many and varied factors, among which are geographic and climatic conditions, transportation facilities, cultural and social traits and contacts, economic services and enterprises, and religious and social relationships.

While the principles and plans set forth in the following sections of this document will be directed toward a community rather specifically defined, they will in a degree apply to other types of association whether local, national, or world-wide in scope. Among these types is the neighborhood, an area smaller than the community in which there is also a community of interest and opportunity for face-to-face contacts. The community may be made up of an aggregation of neighborhoods held together by some common interest or purpose. Still larger groupings of people, such as the county, the state, the nation, and the world, have elements which inspire in citizens a feeling of community. The sense of "we-ness" also characterizes areas and regions, such as the Chicagoland area or the Finger Lakes region. Yet these areas lack certain intimate and vital elements which are common to a genuine community.

There is a sense in which the word "community" is used apart from geographical connotations. We speak accordingly of an association of people based solely on special common interests. The "Christian rural fellowship" or the "Protestant community" designate such an association of common interests. But wherever the term is used in that sense an endeavor will be made to make clear in the context the special use of the word.

The phrase "social order" also should not be confused with community. Social order designates those patterns of economic, racial, and political relationships which make up the structure and character of social life, particularly the economic and the political. The relationships and the forces which issue from them come to a focus in the community but do not constitute the community.

Powerful educational forces issue from this complex of human relationships which the churches must take into account as they plan their total educational program.

## III

THE COMMUNITY AS EDUCATOR

The inclusion of the community as a whole in a program of Christian education may seem to some to require justification. It can and should be so included on the grounds of good educational theory and practice.

Our best scientific evidence as to how children and youth acquire their characters is becoming clear as a result of recent psychological studies. One factor in character development which has been emphasized by these investigations is the relationships people have with one another. These relationships include many kinds of situations and include responses to a great variety of persons and groups. What happens to an individual and what he does as a result of these relationships with his friends, the janitor, the corner policeman, the neighborhood grocer, his teacher and parents, makes up his total educational experience. It is the involvement of persons in a complex pattern of relationships which is the essence of community life that has such powerful educational influence whether for good or for evil.

If it be said that such community impacts as we are emphasizing are indirect, incidental, and relatively unplanned for educational influences, the statement must be accepted as essentially true. But this does not mean that their educational force and value are any less important or effective. They are probably more so. Here is posed for us our most distressing educational problem — how to devise a positive program which will further counteract or redirect, as may be necessary, this community influence to make it more useful in forming character. The community teaches "willy-nilly." As Christian educators we are to see to it that it be made an influence for desirable character growth in boys and girls, and in adults as well.

Let us look at our American communities: large cities, towns, and rural areas. The following questions which may be raised about them indicate the many ways in which the dominant characteristics of a community may shape the character of its citizens.

1. Its main economic interests and the way they are carried on: Are they industry, commerce, farming, a race track, or a divorce mill?
2. Its leading citizens: Who are they, and is their moral leadership constructive?
3. The community agencies which are prominently brought to public attention: Are they predominately selfish or social in their purposes?



4. Its degree of solidarity, of unity, of mutual friendliness: Are there many conflicts which repeatedly divide the population into factions and classes, or have the citizens learned to work and live together?
5. The extent to which there is an emphasis upon cultural plans and agencies - schools, churches, libraries and the like: Are these institutions the pride and joy of its people, or do the citizens think mainly in terms of commercial enterprises and profits therefrom?
6. The physical layout and plan for the community: To what extent is it a place of beauty, of order, and of comfort for all the people?
7. The motives for recreation in the community: Is recreation provided primarily for profit by commercial agencies without regard to character outcomes, or is it furnished by socially minded agencies for the character growth of the participants?
8. The moral habits of the community: Is honesty or dishonesty in the business and social relationships of the community the habitual practice of the people? Are the patterns of behavior between the sexes desirable? Is the community conscience alert to guard against all forms of gambling? Is the use of beverage alcohol an accepted social custom?

Approaching the question from another point of view, it is readily seen that some communities place intolerable handicaps upon the churches and the forces of Christian education by the very nature of their organized and communal life. In such communities no matter how hard churches attempt to lead their people into Christian life, the community influences work not with, but against them. Typical of these are:

1. The new "mushroom" type. The "war emergency areas" and special housing for veterans are fresh in our thinking, but they are not the first, nor are they likely to be the last of this kind.
2. The old, "gone-to-seed," in-bred communities, from which the young and ambitious persons have gone out to find better opportunities.
3. The "half-and-half" communities, outwardly respectable but for various reasons tolerating some situation or practice, economic or political, which is destructive of character.
4. The communities which may be said to be "indifferent" having little or no interest or pride in matters cultural or spiritual.

5. The type of community whose physical location and structure are handicaps to easy transportation, to beautification, and to good health.
6. The community in which antagonisms between racial, religious and cultural groups have become so strong that restrictive covenants, bitter political conflicts, discrimination in education and employment, and other manifestations of social cleavage are common practices.
7. The communities in which the major industry is positively harmful or at least questionable, so far as its influence on character is concerned.

There remains one emergent factor in community life which may prove to be of tremendous importance in the next few decades: It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain Sunday as a day on which a major portion of the task of propagating religion through worship, preaching, and teaching can be accomplished. Increased travel has led us to become a much more mobile people than was formerly the case. With Saturday almost a universal holiday, and with a forty-hour week for labor an actuality, and a thirty-hour week a possibility, the weekend vacation is becoming almost an American behavior pattern.

Rural as well as urban areas will feel the effect of this new development, although in a different way. The result is that the church is faced with a sociological trend from which there is no escape, the likelihood of finding many of the church's constituency away from home and on the move from Friday to Monday.

This changing community pattern demands that we find the best new ways for evangelizing both the church-minded citizens and the larger unreached multitude. Whatever the particular plans evolved, however, there is one imperative which must be considered: a single local church or a single denomination working alone cannot in any appreciable degree act effectively. The problem is both so vast and of such a nature that collective or corporate action is required. Our churches must "pool their resources" in this day of new problems and new procedures. Only so can the quality of educational and spiritual environment be kept high and the community be worthy of the title of Teacher of the Worthy Life.

#### IV

#### THE BASIS OF THE CHURCHES' CONCERN FOR THE COMMUNITY

##### 1.

The community concern of the churches is rooted in the nature of personality.

Each individual is unique. At the same time each individual is related to other individuals. Society as well as individuality is therefore inherent in the very structure of life. That is, it is a "given." That society is basic to human life may be seen at least upon three levels.

First, upon the biological level. The individual is born into a social group, the family. Society is thus co-terminous with human existence itself.

Secondly, upon the cultural level. Through social processes what preceding generations have wrought is conserved, modified, and transmitted to each succeeding generation. If society did not play a role of conservation and transmission, each generation would have to begin afresh without the treasure house of accumulated experience.

Thirdly, upon the psychological level. Life involves responses to "another" and in such responses one discovers "oneself." Self-consciousness and other-consciousness are therefore two aspects of a single experience. The truth about the individual and social aspects of human personality may perhaps best be thought of as "individual-in-society." There are some who base their view of Christian salvation upon the fact of individuality. Others base their view upon the fact of society. There is some truth in both of these views, but neither is adequate as a sole interpretation of the totality of human life. In spite of a phrasing which on the surface may seem to be to the contrary, the first is essentially an individualism which drags in the social nature of human experience only as a handmaiden to personal salvation. At its best, the second is too moralistic; at less than its best, it is prudential, using the values of religion to conserve the contemporary status quo.

## 2.

### The community concern of the churches is rooted in the structure of social relations.

This structure is as fundamental to life as is the structure of the physical universe. Both are divinely ordained.

Each individual is involved in relationships of an institutional character. For example, at every stage of social development all men are consumers and almost all are producers. In this fact all are involved in what is called the "economic order." Again, each person is born into a society where there is a division of the population based upon birth, race, and other considerations. While the subjective responses to such factors are man-made, the factors themselves are a part of the "given" in life. Again, each individual is a member of and carries responsibilities in a political order, i.e., he is a citizen.

The members of the Christian churches are inextricably involved in these institutional relationships. The question that inevitably follows is: What influence is to guide and inspire these inescapable relationships? The community concern of the



churches is therefore rooted in a functional view of the individual due to the very structure of social relations themselves.

The involvement of the individual in community varies in its geographical immediacy. Its focus is in the community of a limited and specific area, but it extends beyond this to the community of the nation and out into the world of nations.

It should be noted, however, that, if the Christian churches are to express their full concern in the community, they must hold the local and the larger aspects of the community in proper balance. In its world-wide extent the community is more and more impinging upon the individual and calling upon him for increasingly intelligent and constructive responses. At the same time the local community is where the fact of community itself comes to a focus upon the individual. It is the testing-ground for his social integrity. Its welfare is uniquely his responsibility as it cannot be that of those who live in another local community.

### 3.

The community concern of the churches is rooted in the nature of God.

The basic presupposition of the community concern of the churches is a religious one, grounded in the character and purpose of God. In the following affirmations about God lies the spiritual basis for a community concern.

#### A.

The love of God

God seeks the good of all through His work as Creator and Redeemer. The determining, activating power in the universe is the Divine goodwill toward man.

#### B.

The fatherhood of God

All men are made in the image of God, born of His will. Both the beginning and ultimate destiny of human life, individually and corporately, are found in the purpose of their Father in Heaven. Inevitably the brotherhood of man issues from this presupposition. Thus are men joined to one another as members of the human family under the Fatherhood of God.

#### C.

The immanence and transcendence of God

God as Creator is not fully apprehended in His handiwork in nature. He is to be found in history as well. Throughout the

generations God is seeking men who so live together that society becomes a growing embodiment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

The purpose of God is over and above its fulfilment at any moment of history in any form of society. In the light of this, two conclusions follow: all social arrangements of which we are a part are judged inadequate and new paths of community and social living are ever being marked out for us to take.

#### 4.

The community concern of the church is rooted in the application of the Christian ethic to life.

The community is the focus of dynamic social forces. Within each geographical community there are associations or groups of people based upon other considerations, sometimes called "communities of interest": educational, social, religious, cultural, economic, etc. There are also "communities of opinion" which unite people in a broad common agreement on issues considered important. "Communities" of these types are, in fact, social forces in that they are channels through which human energies are pooled and released. The corporate life of a geographical community is, therefore, an ever-shifting equilibrium of these social forces as they confront each other to seek or to share control.

The ethical need that arises out of the dynamic character of community life is basically spiritual and of a two-fold aspect. First, each community requires a sufficient body of mutuality so that its social forces will not tear community life apart. This mutuality must rest back upon an experience of solidarity which expresses itself in justice, tolerance, and a concern for the common good. Secondly, within this body of mutuality there needs to be room for the release and stimulation of new energies so that the community may develop according to changed conditions and new insights. This makes freedom an imperative which in turn rests upon the recognition of the worth and dignity of the individual.

"Communities of interest and opinion" represent human drives seeking various purposes ranging all the way from extremely selfish to conspicuously altruistic. These drives are expressed, stabilized, and conserved in a number of ways, some becoming social institutions. These social institutions take on their character according to the dominant purposes which they incorporate. And finally the sum total of these social institutions represents the spiritual tone or character of the community.

There are implications of the utmost importance to the Christian churches in the fact that a community has a spiritual quality or character. A community exerts great authority over the individual. At times community influence is coercive, threatening

dire penalties for opposition. At times it demands a choice, the consequences of which are far-reaching. Generally it is pervasive and subtle, but none the less decisive in its impact.

A consideration of practical importance to the churches rising out of this is that the community is of tremendous significance for ethical living. For most people it takes a definite moral effort to become aware of and to respond with integrity to the nature and character of the social forces that play constantly upon one. The failure of insight on the part of the churches at this point has helped to bring about that devastating contradiction of modern life, namely, the disparity between an individual's face-to-face relationships and, for example, his business policies and political practices. In the latter case, it means that the individual yields the moral authority of his life to the community's economic mores, many of which are based on considerations other than ethical.

It is to be stressed, however, that community life is amenable to change, both in its character and influence. History shows that such changes wait only upon time. Public opinion does change as does public behavior.

In addition to his face-to-face relationships with family and neighbor, the individual has institutional relationships which, although generally impersonal in character, yet are vitally important both to the community and to the discharge of the individual's social responsibilities. For example, an individual may never sustain a direct relationship with thousands of parents in his city, but by the exercise of a social responsibility toward the city's public school system, he influences the education of the children of these parents. As his face-to-face relationships, these institutional relationships inescapably involve the individual in moral judgments and so constitute an area of ethical living.

It is to be further recognized that these institutional relationships at many points frustrate the Christian in the practice of his faith. For example, where racial segregation in transportation facilities is a matter of law or binding custom, the individual is not so free to practice the Christian insight that men are children of God as he would be if no such laws existed. Individual faith and commitment to Christ are independent of any particular form of community organization, but the expression of that faith in justice and brotherhood is very much related to the character of a community.

##### 5.

The community concern of the church is rooted in the nature and mission of the church itself.

The church as a social institution is involved deeply in the complex life of the community. In each involvement the church and the community influence each other.



Again, the community as a whole or its "communities of opinion and of interest" may seek to use the church for their own purposes. At times this is done cynically; at other times because there is a secularized apprehension of Christian faith and life. The church is involved in the struggle among groups that give the community its dynamic aspect.

To designate the church as a social institution or as one of the "communities within a community" is to indicate that its life is lived on the plane of history. This is not to divorce it from the deep needs of the individual, but rather to indicate that it can help the individual find the meaning of his Christian life on the plane of history. This the church will do along three lines.

First, as it itself becomes a "community of interest and opinion" in which the righteousness of God throughout all of its life is demonstrated with power to the secular communities.

Secondly, as it constantly reminds men that their loyalty to God is never in terms of the status quo, but always in terms of what God desires social relationships to become.

Thirdly, in all of its thinking and proclamation of its message the church must build upon the reality of the community even as it does upon the reality of the individual. Certainly, the church cannot deal with the great issues of evil, sin, guilt, and salvation with anything less than a Gospel that is as relevant to the nature of community as it is to the nature of the individual.

## 6.

### A Protestant strategy for the expression of Christian community concern

Our democratic way of life and expression of community organization in civic and governmental affairs depend for their undergirding upon a vital religious faith and an adequate expression of that faith in the community. Protestantism, along with the other great religious faiths has a primary responsibility for relating these basic concepts of freedom and democracy to the ongoing processes of community life.

The point of special concern for Protestantism is in the relation of the church to political life. There is no definitive answer that applies equally to all periods of Protestant history, nor is there an adequate understanding at the present time of the relation of the church to politics.

All too often it is assumed that politics is inherently evil and that somehow Christians soil themselves by participating in it. As a matter of fact, politics is the science and art of

government. Politics is good or bad as people make it so. Protestantism must see to it that Christians make politics a means by which good community life may be realized.

The end of Protestant political activity should not be special privilege for the church as an institution nor for political status or position; rather the end sought is the spiritual, moral, and social welfare of the community as a whole. And to achieve this end, it is neither desirable nor necessary in the Protestant view, for the church to act in any other capacity than as a moral force in the community. The role of the church as a corporate body is that of addressing those in public offices concerning their duties as the duly constituted representatives of the people in the formation and administration of government policy. Wherever its members come into public office, Protestantism holds that they should be directed not by an authoritarian church or ecclesiastical official, but by their own enlightened and informed Christian consciences.

However, the fact that Protestantism rejects the idea of the church as an organized political force does not negate the obligation of the church to express in appropriate ways its social concern and to make its influence felt in political life. The following are offered as among such channels for all Christians, subject to the stipulation that the church is an instrument for social change through political action without itself becoming a political party.

1. The members of the churches are themselves citizens and therefore have not only the obligation but also the opportunity to express their Christianity through their citizenship. Christian living has in it the obligation to use citizenship as part of one's service to the Kingdom of God on earth.
2. The Christian churches have responsibility for informing and training their members in awareness and understanding of appropriate action on social needs and issues in the light of Christian principles. It has the important responsibility for training young people and adults for political responsibility so that they may see the importance of holding public office and in bringing to public leadership Christian dedication.
3. As the churches proceed with their program of social education and action, divisions of opinion will inevitably arise. A local congregation, a national body, or intermediate group should use such opportunities to engage their members in a search for relevant facts and interpretations to discover Christian courses of action. When at the end of such a process, division still prevails it is the churches' responsibility to indicate whatever common ground exists and what differences remain unresolved. Christians should be urged to act according to their Christian consciences.

In its public utterances the churches should state frankly the range of significant agreements and disagreements indicating where possible the proportions of each.

4. There will be other occasions when the churches at various points in their official life will have achieved virtual unanimity about the Christian position which should be taken on specific issues deemed to have religious and moral significance. When this happens the churches have both a right and an obligation to make their witness known and to take steps to make that witness effective.
5. The individual Christian should be encouraged to associate himself with voluntary groups both within and without the churches which are formed around convictions on issues considered vital to social well-being. When the individual Christian does this in relation to non-church groups in particular, he should use discriminating judgment, not only as to the ends sought by the group, but as to methods used to achieve those ends. At the same time, he should exercise his judgment in such a way as not necessarily to inhibit him from participation with such groups because they are not equally in line with Christian insights at all points. Of special importance is it that the Christian churches encourage groups within their fellowship to unite on behalf of special concerns and interests. Thus they may grow through such discipline, and provide leadership for their fellow members.
6. The role of the churches in a ministry of reconciliation when combined with a passion for justice based upon love and brotherhood is of great importance. It will often happen that God's judgment seems to rest more heavily upon one group than upon another. However, the churches as such will remember that all parties to a conflict have sinned and fallen short of the will of God, and that their ultimate task is to bring all parties in conflict to a higher understanding of their relationship to one another as children of God. The churches' function conceived in such reconciling terms gives them a creative and redemptive role in community life which no other institutions are equipped to perform.
7. It is also important that provision be made whereby persons of various occupations can study and take action in response to the implications of Christianity for their respective vocations. The responsibilities of producers, investors, and consumers should be studied in the same way. The possibilities of such group inquiry and action resulting therefrom are immeasurable. By neglecting this aspect of adult Christian education, the churches are missing an excellent opportunity to bring the Christian testimony to bear upon a secular social order.



3. In all of this it is imperative that the churches make their own life and practice a demonstration of the Christian ethic. As the churches put into operation in their corporate life their own highest ideals in inter-racial relations, in economic practices including the investments of their funds, and other aspects of their life, they make their strongest impact upon the community.

## V.

### IMPERATIVES FOR INTER-CHURCH COOPERATION IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

One of the most important issues which local churches face today concerns their cooperation with the churches of other denominations in the community. The following are offered as considerations that make inter-church cooperation in the community necessary.

1. The Gospel which the Christian churches proclaim is a unity of faith and life. The program of Christian education which seeks to further the acceptance and practice of the Gospel in the community should itself be a witness to this unity. In turn, such a demonstration of unity becomes a new factor in a program of education for unity.
2. The Christian ethic is one in which the strong share their strength with the weak. All churches have both their strength and weakness in relation to the others so that all need the pooling of resources, material and spiritual, that comes through cooperative effort.
3. Each community needs a core of cohesiveness. Through lack of unity among themselves, the Christian churches can be a divisive instead of a cohesive force. When this occurs the churches are not only undermining a prerequisite of community life, but they are betraying religion which is the ultimate unifying power in human life, both individual and corporate.
4. Each local community is made up of diverse social groups - economic, cultural, racial, etc. These are found in varying degrees in the local churches of the community, depending often upon their location and their denominational affiliation. Inter-church cooperation in religious education will more adequately meet the needs which arise out of the fact that the community itself is socially inclusive.
5. The individual member of the local church lives his life not only as a member of a parish but as a citizen of the community of which his parish is but a part. If his local church is to aid him in meeting his religious responsibilities and opportunities arising from his community relationships, the church itself will be strengthened by sharing in inter-church cooperation in religious education.

6. Similarly, the local community itself is a part of the national and world-wide community, and if it is to rise both to its needs and to its responsibilities it must think and act accordingly. Of all the groups and institutions in the local community, the church is potentially most capable of meeting these needs and responsibilities because of its universal faith and its world outreach. Inter-church cooperation is indispensable for interpreting fully the meaning of world Christianity to the community.
7. Previously we have recognized that the local community, both as a whole and in each of its parts, is an educational force. If the churches are to be a vital element in determining the character of that force, there must be conscious planning and effort by the churches in their own Christian education program on the community level. Likewise, the several interests in the community that are devoted to education and character building are themselves organized on the community level. The Christian educational forces of the community will be better equipped to work with and through such groups if their approach is likewise community-wide.

An inter-church cooperative approach to Christian education is therefore rooted in the essential nature of community life and in its religious needs as well as in the genius of the Christian faith. This approach will be most effective when it rests upon a careful delineation of the collective or corporate educational functions of the churches.

## VI.

### THE COLLECTIVE OR CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL TASKS OF THE CHURCHES IN THE COMMUNITY

The churches have a corporate educational mission to the community which is a part of their total mission to make the Christian faith an integral and dynamic factor in both individual and social living. The nature of this mission grows out of the need for the fullest understanding and application of the Christian faith to life on the part of every person and every organized group in the community. It grows out of the nature of the community life, and its need for the moral controls which Christians hold are to be sustained and developed only by religious faith and religious education. The common tasks which issue from these corporate needs of the community, and those which emerge when Christian educators of many denominations live and work together in the same community are the corporate educational tasks of the churches. In this section of the report these responsibilities are the focus of attention.

There is a division of labor between the educational work of an individual local church and the collective educational work of a group of local churches or denominations in the community, although

a sharp line cannot be drawn between them. Each is inextricably related to the other. In fact, the collective or corporate functions of Protestant Christianity must be soundly anchored in the life and work of individual local churches, which in turn are dependent upon inter-church organization for the effective expression of their ideals and purposes in the corporate life of the community.

The educational work of local churches and their inter-church organizations is essentially one program with equal concern for the welfare of individuals and of the community as a whole. For the most part local churches are concerned to establish and emphasize a direct relationship to individuals through teaching, administration of the ordinances or sacraments, worship, fellowship and service. Through these means they prepare individuals for influence and leadership in social living. They produce community-minded people, if their work is well done.

Complementing these predominantly individual relationships of the local congregation, inter-church councils deal with the needs of the community as a whole. They are the means through which the churches strengthen their own work with individuals and families, but primarily they are channels through which the Christian concern for social and individual living that has been created by local churches finds effective expression in community life.

The total mission of the churches is a synthesis of several emphases, each complementary to all the others and fundamentally the same in both local church and in inter-church organizations. This mission, some believe, consists of fellowship, evangelism, education, worship, and social action. But whatever the definition, a council should mediate these basic emphases to its community. The council's distinctive role in this process is quite different from that of the local church, but the fundamental nature of its task is the same. The work of inter-church councils is not marginal or secondary in importance but is integral to the churches' mission to the whole of life.

This fact must be realized by the denominations before the council system can be harnessed fully to their corporate tasks. Inter-church councils are as indispensable to local churches and the denominations for winning community life to Christ as their foreign mission societies are to the winning of other nations. Their work is determined by the same comprehensive Christian strategy that determines the imperative of foreign missions, and they deserve support commensurate with their importance.

The specific problem is: "What are the collective or corporate educational tasks of the churches in the community?" Or stated in other words: "What are the educational functions of a council of churches?" This is one of the most important questions before the churches today. However this question may finally be answered, the educational phase of the total council movement should



be developed in terms of (1) the fundamental functions of religion in community life, and (2) the inner needs of the churches as a Christian fellowship which has a corporate mission to the community.

The problems involved in these considerations must be examined and re-examined until a clearly defined delineation of an inter-church council's functions emerges into the consciousness of local church and denominational leadership. As a contribution to a fuller understanding of those functions, the following outline is offered as a tentative analysis of the corporate educational tasks which the churches should undertake through their inter-church councils.

1. Community-wide Fellowship and Sharing of Experience in Christian Education

The sense of Christian comradeship in a common task and the sharing of experiences in a community-wide program of Christian education are in themselves sources of spiritual undergirding for the Christian cause when they arise out of facing the common needs of life in the community. The inter-church council with its regular and special activities of planning and action will itself be a primary source of fellowship and sharing. Some examples: The annual community-wide conference or convention; superintendents' and age-group workers' fellowships; youth councils; young adult fellowships; ministers' associations.

2. Ecumenical Education

The actual experience of respecting and sharing the Christian faith in inter-church activities is a most productive kind of ecumenical education, but this must be definitely planned for. Inter-church councils must stimulate a sense of belonging to the Church Universal. Some examples: Well planned services of worship which emphasize the universal nature of the Christian fellowship; regular opportunities for special ecumenical studies; and leadership in integrating this emphasis into each local church program.

3. Active Concern in the Churches and in the Community for Public Education

The challenge of secular trends in public education makes it urgent that the churches engage in bold experimentation with new patterns of relationships between the public schools and the churches of a local community. A new vital Christian concern for public education must be expressed in Protestantism if disastrous consequences are not to overtake its Christian educational program. This need is developed in a separate section of this report (VIII).

The goals, objectives, and needs of public schools need to be interpreted to the churches, and the functional values of religion need to be interpreted to public school teachers and administrators. The emerging sensitivity to the worth of persons, the emphasis upon the democratic process, the spirit of free inquiry are spiritual values characteristic of recent trends in the philosophy and practice of public education. These values are to be understood, encouraged, and undergirded by the churches. The committee recommends therefore that there be launched at once a program of liaison relations between inter-church councils and public school systems. Some examples: Conferences of churchmen and public school teachers, principals and superintendents for fellowship and mutual understanding; an annual occasion for welcoming new teachers, for deepening the sense of Christian vocation among teachers, and for appreciation of faithful service; conferences for developing understanding of the problems faced by public schools and support of measures for improvement of public school equipment and leadership; cultivation of closer relations between inter-church councils and teachers' colleges, accrediting agencies, and professional associations; support of the commendable activities of public schools; observance of American Education Week; encouragement of high moral standards; the use of criticism as a last resort.

#### 4. Developing Public Opinion Favorable to Christian Education

The importance of public opinion increases as social organizations become more complex and inter-related. The purpose and function of Christian education and its relation to the problems of community life must be continually brought to the attention of the people. A sustained effort to create a favorable public opinion is a central function of inter-church councils. Some examples: Liaison relations with public opinion forming forces, e.g., the press, radio and movies; the use of special days or weeks, e.g., religious education week, Christian family week; recognition of special meritorious service by leaders in religious education.

#### 5. Cooperative Efforts to Reach All the People with Christian Education

The churches of a local community need the strength of one another to reach all the people for which they have responsibility. These extension efforts may take several forms in a particular community depending upon its size and needs. Through them the churches will extend their outreach to people whom they do not serve through the efforts of individual local churches; increase the Christian education of their own people; and permeate the community with an

appreciation of Christian values. Some examples:

- a. Weekday religious education in cooperation with the public schools, when operated according to standards equal to those of public education, will be a most effective means of extension. This principle in operation is one way in which Protestantism can bring some religious teaching to many children in the community who are now receiving little or no religious training and, at the same time, greatly increase the amount of religious education which will be received by those whom the churches now reach in other ways. In addition, the weekday religious education movement is capable of enhancing the spiritual value of public education without introducing sectarian teaching into education.
- b. Summer vacation religious education programs offer very significant opportunities which can only be realized fully through cooperative efforts. The consecutive daily sessions of vacation church schools provide a cumulative value which is unique to this kind of program.
- c. Radio education offers a great opportunity for the churches to reach the masses of people with religious teaching. "Victorious Living" and other programs now being produced have demonstrated the possibilities of radio for religious education when the programs are prepared under the supervision of persons competent in radio production.
- d. Community surveys to ascertain where the unreached people are located, followed by -
- e. Annual or periodic community visitations to enroll the children in church schools and weekday religious education classes where they exist. Such efforts should be geared to the total plans of the churches for reaching the people through evangelism. Home visitation evangelism by lay people when prepared for properly is particularly in harmony with the educational approach to evangelism.
- f. Community-wide emphases on religious education values through special, seasonal observance afford unique opportunities for the churches to make a corporate approach to the community which cannot be done through separate efforts of either local churches or denominations. Religious education week and Christian family week observances; and the use of anniversary or festival seasons, such as World Order Sunday, Brotherhood Month, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and others may be used to reach the community as a whole with distinctly religious teachings.



## 6. Community Coordinating Councils of Character-building Agencies

The churches should be leaders in the support of movements designed to coordinate the character-building agencies of the community. They should encourage them, use them, and provide leadership as well as specialized skills to help them realize their fullest potentialities for character development. Another section (IX) develops this need more fully.

## 7. Educational Undergirding for Effective Community Social Action

The educational function of the churches on community social problems is widely accepted in Protestantism, however much difference of opinion there may be about other phases of Christian social action. The educational forces have a large responsibility as well as opportunity, therefore, to make education a vital factor in community social relations. This can be done best, perhaps, through a program of Christian citizenship enlistment and training based on specific factual data regarding the community's own organization and needs. In so far as possible it should issue in action on civic matters. As with all other basic functions of the churches, education for Christian citizenship must be grounded in the local churches and integrated into social action itself; into evangelism, worship, fellowship, as well as Christian education, but it must have a community outreach which finds expression through inter-church councils.

New patterns of local inter-church program planning, curriculum development, and integration of local church objectives with cooperative effort must be found if Protestant Christianity is to make effective in community life its inner social convictions and idealism. Christian education should lead the way in this pioneering task. Some examples: A school of social relations or Christian citizenship; an annual recognition service for young people who reach voting age; correlation of church programs with social studies in public schools; research and survey into community problems; specific action projects designed to change social conditions; inclusion of minority racial and national groups into a community-wide Christian fellowship of love and concern.

## 8. Religious Education Needs of Public or Private Institutions for Care of Unfortunate People

Dependents and delinquent children, the chronically ill, the mentally ill, the aged, the handicapped -- whether in private or tax-supported institutions -- are often overlooked. Including adult criminals there are estimated to be more than a million and a half persons in the hospitals,

homes, correctional and other institutions of the United States at any one time, exclusive of those who might be in an institution for only a day or two. A highly skilled service is needed, which should be given in consultation with the authorities in charge of the institutions and interdenominational or denominational experts in these matters.

Some examples of activities: Bible classes and other educational activities; services of worship; friendly visitations, distribution of religious literature; part-time or full-time chaplains.

9. "Collective Self-Service" Activities to Strengthen the Religious Educational Programs of the Local Churches Themselves

This area provides the largest possibility for conflict between denominations and local inter-church councils, because service directly to local churches has been increasingly recognized to be primarily a denominational responsibility as the denomination's supervision of religious education in local churches has steadily increased. Therefore, all such services affecting the local churches should be launched only after the most careful collaboration in planning.

Here as in so many other areas of interdependence among local churches, new patterns of relationship and program must be sought through courageous experimentation if the needs of thousands of local churches in America for religious education leadership are to be met. In many situations this can be done only through the pooling of all available resources.

Some examples of activities: Community leadership schools, conferences, and institutes; cooperative laboratory schools; employment of a community director of religious education for service directly to local churches; and perhaps the development of community buildings for religious education and recreation.

A final word needs to be said about the corporate educational responsibilities of the churches in community life. It is hoped that the time may come when there will be not only wide understanding and agreement among the denominations as to their common or corporate functions in community life, but a willingness to commit without reservations certain responsibilities for community and inter-church relations to their inter-church agencies, and then give them the support they need in order to accomplish their assigned tasks.

## VII..

THE PLACE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE PROGRAM  
OF A COMMUNITY INTER-CHURCH ORGANIZATION

In foregoing sections there have been indicated the educational influences of the community and the effect of those influences upon the educational programs of its churches. The collective educational responsibilities of the churches in a local community have been outlined. In recognition of such influences and responsibilities, church leaders in hundreds of communities throughout North America during the last hundred years have developed organized inter-church expressions of their common concern for the betterment of community life and the propagation of the Christian faith.

An early expression of this common concern was the Sunday school association movement which, from the middle of the last century and through the first quarter of this century, brought millions of Protestant Sunday school teachers and officers together for fellowship, exchange of ideas and cooperative action.

About twenty-five years ago these Sunday school associations, which had hitherto been non-denominational associations of teachers and other church leaders, began to reorganize into councils of religious education. These councils were inter-denominational organizations because their governing bodies consisted of official representatives of their member churches of church schools, or their member denominational boards of Christian education.

During the past fifteen years most of the councils of religious education have merged or reorganized into councils of churches created and maintained by the corporate actions of their member churches. Still more recently there has been a rapid development of councils of churches in the smaller communities, many of them being reorganized ministerial associations.

Detailed suggestions for the organization of a community inter-church council are to be found in pamphlet No. 2 in the Church Cooperation Series, prepared by The Inter-Council Field Department and entitled "How to Organize a Local Council of Churches and Religious Education."

One of the important phases of the program of these all-inclusive councils is that group of activities usually classified as Christian education. It has happened sometimes, that when the general leadership of the church determines the nature of the program of such councils, Christian education has been relegated to a minor place in the total program. It is important to indicate, therefore, the principles of organization which will facilitate the integration of Christian education into the total community program of the churches.



# 1. An All-inclusive Organization Preferred

The desirability of the all-inclusive council of churches type of organization is generally recognized. But in some communities the most practical approach to such a total program may be a council of religious education or an inter-church organization established to carry on just one type of activity, such as a leadership education school, community vacation church schools, or weekday religious education.

## 2. Representation of Christian Education Leadership

The representatives appointed to the main and ad interim governing bodies of a local council of churches by each of its member churches or denominational bodies should include one or more of the persons who are most responsible for the Christian education program of the appointing body. Each committee responsible for the Christian educational activities of the council should have in its membership those persons who carry similar responsibilities in the member churches.

## 3. Christian Education Committees

Two general types of committee organization for Christian education within the total structure of the council of churches are now in vogue. In the first and more common type there is a Christian education department or committee within which is established a committee or subcommittee for each specialized phase of Christian education. In the other type each of these special phases of Christian education, such as vacation church schools, weekday religious education and leadership education is planned and carried out by a committee responsible directly to the council and its executive committee rather than being responsible to the council through a department of Christian education. In the first type the chairman of the department represents all of the committees of that department on the executive or other program planning and coordinating body of the council. In the second type each specialized phase of the program is represented directly on the executive committee or other coordinating group.

Those favoring the first type of organization believe that such a grouping of specialized functions or activities in a department of Christian education insures a stronger visible position for Christian education within the total council program and facilitates the continued coordination of related activities which formerly constituted the total program of a council of religious education.

Those favoring the second type believe that committees on leadership education, vacation church schools, etc., each directly responsible to the executive body along with similar specialized committees on comity, social service, evangelism, citizenship, etc., are more likely to relate the spirit and procedure of Christian education to the whole life and work of the council.

#### 4. Inter-faith and Other Relationships

It is extremely important that the entire religious community, Jewish and Christian, in any given geographical community present a united front against irreligion. This is especially true in the religious education of children and young people. The Protestant council of churches should, therefore, cultivate cordial relationships with the Roman Catholic and Jewish groups in the development of such community projects as weekday church schools, religious education week, and religious education for citizenship. This cooperation should be based upon common interests with the full understanding that major differences still exist and will still motivate each group toward the propagation of its own faith.

The relation of the Protestant churches through the council with all other character-building agencies in the community, private and public or governmental, is also important and is dealt with in another section (IX).

### VIII.

#### RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

The relation between religion and public education is increasingly commanding attention in America for four major reasons.

First, the recent rapid growth of the weekday religious education movement is making necessary an explicit policy in states and local communities since, in varying degree, the program requires cooperation between school and church. Thus the new interest in religious education expresses itself not merely as pressure by the church upon the school for recognition of a "claim", but as the influence of the religious consciousness of the community upon its educational consciousness.

Secondly, there is a growing dissatisfaction with public education on the part of a small but significant number of churchmen. Local churches and some larger church bodies are seriously considering the establishment of parochial schools and a few have already done so. The source of this dissatisfaction is to be found in the conviction that only through religious schools can children be nurtured effectively in the Christian life.

Thirdly, the gradual expansion of the school program, which tends to make it more and more an expression of total community interest and concern, makes increasingly anomalous the avoidance of all responsibility on the part of public education with respect to religion. With every extension of school activity in areas of community interest, the absence of any concern for religion renders the school more subject to the criticism that it regards religion as relatively unimportant. This gradual secularization has largely been unpremeditated. But it has been steady and has not been seriously challenged until recently.

Fourthly, the widespread tendency among educators to adopt a philosophy which makes education a unitary process gives to the rigid separation between religious education and general education an aspect of artificial dualism.

The problem thus arising is recognized as serious by educators working at the elementary, secondary and higher levels. It presents great difficulty because of our commitment in America to the principle of separation of church and state. This principle is dear to the Protestants because of our concern for religious liberty. No proposal that does violence to it can be accepted by Protestant Christians.

However, there are many variations of practice in America when it comes to the application of the conviction. There is great need for clarification of principles and for consistency in their application. Unless the churches do this basic task at once, they may find one of the unique values of a free society violated and finally discarded. Certain generalizations seem warranted from the Protestant point of view.

In the first place, it should be obvious that no absolute separation between church and state exists or is possible. Indeed, the principle should not be stated in terms of an absolute separation which would imply that there should never be inter-action between them. The church as a corporate body depends on the state for its effective right to hold property and to be secure in its possession. As a social institution it is subject to innumerable laws and regulations. It is even limited in respect to religious teaching and practice by the requirements of public order and morality as determined by the state. Furthermore, the state gives to organized religion the same subsidy in the form of tax exemption that other private and non-profit agencies enjoy. Large numbers of clergy also receive their salaries directly from the state as chaplains in the armed forces and in public institutions.

Manifestly, the principle of separation of church and state as it is practiced at the present time furnishes no rule of thumb, susceptible of automatic application. Rather, it denotes a norm of relationships whose specific implications are always under review.

Freedom of responsibility for both the church and the state must be assured. Neither one should be allowed to control the other. The churches in their specific religious teaching must be free of



control by government or its agencies. This applies to worship, religious education or any other activity which the churches claim as exclusively their own. On the other hand, the state must be free of domination or control by ecclesiastical organizations.

A second generalization flows from the constitutional provision by which public education in America is subject to state and local control. There is no national pattern of American education and there are no uniform laws or regulations by which the principle of separation of church and state is implemented. That principle means, in operational terms, what state and local governments declare it to mean or, through a silence, permit it to mean. It is scarcely possible to define even an irreducible minimum of limitation, in the light of the amazing variety of practice. On its face, the all but universal constitutional or legal inhibition in the several states against sectarian teaching in public schools is such a minimum limitation. Yet the word "sectarian" has come to be defined, not in any theological sense, but rather in terms of what the community regards as divisive to the extent of being intolerable. Thus what is regarded as sectarian in one community is considered nonsectarian in another. For example, in some states the reading of the Bible is required by law. In others it is expressly forbidden as a sectarian practice.

There is considerable variation of opinion in American communities regarding the use of public funds for services related to private schools. Among Protestants there is almost unanimous opposition to the direct appropriation of public funds to non-public schools. Roman Catholics, however, have always contended for the use of public money to support parochial schools. The furnishing by the state of free textbooks to private schools is also generally frowned upon by Protestants. The use of public funds for transportation of children to private schools appears to be somewhat less opposed in Protestant circles. The provision by the state for subsidized lunches to children in private schools sometimes encounters little objection, since this is readily construed as social service rather than educational assistance.

Thirdly, it may be said that the cooperation between schools and church that is involved in the release of pupils at stated hours for attendance at religious education classes is rapidly achieving general acceptance throughout the country. The philosophy underlying this practice, while rarely made explicit, seems to be that the school as a community agency may be properly called on to effectuate any reasonable arrangement which the community believes justified in the interest of the total education of its children. Here, again, there are controversial issues that give much concern, particularly the use of school buildings for released time classes conducted under denominational auspices, and the propriety of granting secondary school credit for work done in these classes.

Against this background of diverse practice and theory we shall record certain judgments concerning the mutual responsibilities of public education and the churches.

1. The community as a whole has a stake in religion education and a corresponding responsibility which it cannot evade. The schools belong to the community and the latter is responsible for making them contribute to the maximum possible degree to the total education of "all the children of all the people." The need for religious education is not met merely by "letting go" of school pupils at stated times when the churches ask for them. The school board, as the community's agent, should always be in a position to determine and maintain standard requirements that must be met by any religious group which proposes to conduct educational work on school time.

The school authorities have no right to determine the content of religious teaching in weekday church schools. They do have the right to determine whether the equipment and program of the religious schools give promise of a genuine educative experience that will warrant either the "release" or the "dismissal" of pupils for a portion of the regular school period. Similarly, the question whether or not school credit shall be given for religious education should be determined by the school authorities strictly as an educational question: Is a genuine educative experience being afforded comparable in results to what is expected from the regular school program for an equal expenditure of pupils' time and consistent with religious freedom?

2. Broadly speaking, when religious education under denominational or interdenominational auspices is carried on during school hours, those in charge should have training and experience comparable to that of the public school teachers.
3. Interest has been expressed by responsible leaders of both the churches and the public schools in the possibility of including in the public school curriculum a "core" of religious instruction based on common elements in the major faiths. Such a program would probably be very difficult to put into effect because of basic differences in the beliefs of Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Jews. There are some values in the proposal. But it does not offer a promising solution to the problem.

No doubt this proposal would be acceptable to many communities. Indeed, there are cities, towns, and rural districts in America which are so nearly homogeneous religiously that a body of Protestant or Catholic doctrine could, with public approval, be taught as the true faith. In some communities it is apparently being done. Furthermore, the principle of local control which is so universally recognized opens the way to doctrinal instruction in religion where legal questions are not raised.

However, the danger to religious freedom involved in this practice is too obvious to be ignored. Most Protestants believe in the right of the citizen to unbelief as well as

to belief. If the school commits itself to a body of religious doctrine, that negative right is in danger of being overridden.

4. In the interest of religious freedom Protestants are bound to sustain the right of withdrawal on grounds of conscience from any class or activity that an individual pupil or his parents regard as harmful to his religious life. This is a principle to be observed with all strictness and, in general, any doubt as to the validity of the objection should be resolved in favor of the objector. Not only so, but the school has a positive responsibility in all such cases to secure to the child immunity from social pressure or censure.
5. Yet the public school has a responsibility in the religious field that extends beyond extramural cooperation with church and synagogue. It is to this area that special attention needs to be given at the present time. It is the function of the school to put the young in possession of their cultural heritage, and to equip them to contribute to its enrichment. This requires an understanding both of the inherited tradition in which a person stands, and of religious traditions in the community which are not his own.

Freedom, both intellectual and spiritual, presupposes an understanding of those elements in the tradition which an educated person is called on to evaluate. Religion is a part of the cultural heritage. For all who take it seriously it is basic to the culture. For those whose attitude toward religion is negative or skeptical, a knowledge of religious ideas, attitudes and institutions is essential if their evaluation of religion is not to rest on superficial and second-hand judgments.

To furnish an intelligent understanding of the place of religion in human history and in contemporary life is part of the function of general education. Religion is not a piece of life that can be isolated for study, but an aspect of individual and social experience in its totality. Every educational discipline should take account of the religious elements that enter into the area of experience which it undertakes to explore.

It is a part of the professional preparation of a teacher to achieve competence in the handling of the religious elements of his particular discipline. This is important in almost every field but indispensable in the humanities, the arts, and the social sciences.

This does not mean specialization, any more than adequate attention to reading ability or physical and mental hygiene on the part of every teacher involves specialization.



It does mean that competence in most fields of education requires an intelligent grasp of the way in which man's religious outlook and concern has entered into his cultural development.

6. To give concrete examples, the study of literature, whether in formal classes or in relation to informal projects, should include our major religious classic, the Bible. From any point of view, the Bible must be considered a basic contribution to our literary heritage. To be ignorant of it is to be less than culturally literate. The study of it need involve no more sectarian indoctrination than the study of Milton or Dante, Shakespeare or Tennyson, provided there is brought to it the same reverence for creative work that all literary study demands.

Likewise, the study of contemporary community life should include the religious institutions, as well as those of government, industry, and social welfare. There is ample evidence that this can be done as part of the social studies program without untoward results and with educational effectiveness. These areas are illustrative of the contribution the schools can make to the study of religion.

7. A question inevitably arises concerning the use of forms and symbols of worship in the schools. Simple services of worship are very commonly a feature of school assembly programs. During the observance of the great Christian festivals the use of religious symbolism in the schools is widespread. Such practices are sometimes criticized but in general they seem to have effective sanction. Although from one point of view worship involves a closer identification with religion than the study of religious beliefs, it seems to be generally assumed that simple services of Christian worship in the public schools, including the reading of Scripture, do no violence to the principle of separation of church and state.

On the other hand, in communities that are sharply divided in religious allegiance, consideration may well be given to the possibility of developing forms of worship that are meaningful to members of different faiths. Even the minimum of such expression - a ritual of silence - may be productive of a deeply reverent mood.

8. It is essential to note here the difference between the function of the school and that of the church and the home. Those who contend that the public school cannot "teach" religion are right to the extent that teaching implies the induction of youth into a particular religious body with a distinctive form of worship and way of life. In a sense, the public school, as many people insist, can teach only "about" religion. But knowledge begins with acquaintance - with knowledge "about." With that necessary preparation carefully made, the home and church can go on with their further work of more intensive religious education.

Our main criticism of the secular educational system is that it results in religious illiteracy, leaving a void which makes the task of intensive religious education difficult, if not impossible. General education should build a foundation in awareness and sensitivity upon which growing persons may build as their own free choice directs. Just as an adequate social education lays a foundation for organized political activity in accord with free choice, so it should equip youth for making intelligent judgments with reference to religious activities.

9. Public educators are right in insisting that when religious subject matter is studied in the school it must be studied with integrity and with complete fidelity to the principle of free inquiry. The fact that religion holds an exalted place in our thought and life must not be made the ground of a claim that it is privileged subject matter with respect to objective inquiry. This need hamper the study of a religious classic no more than it hampers the study of the Declaration of Independence or the Mayflower Compact, which contain profound religious affirmations. Nor need the requirement of free and honest inquiry be a limitation in the study of religious institutions any more than in the study of political and economic groups with their sharply conflicting philosophies. Here, as always, respect for persons and for freedom of conscience is of the essence. Where it obtains, education can proceed unhampered. Where it is lacking no education worthy of the name is possible.
10. The public school has a responsibility to develop as far as it can the spiritual implications of its own common life. It owes an obligation to the community's religious forces to lift its direct and indirect teaching above the level of materialism or thoughtless sensory gratification.

It can assume a much larger responsibility than it has usually undertaken for the creation and nurture of spiritual values. Respect for personality, high moral standards of conduct, love of truth, goodness and beauty, wonder and reverence before a vast and mysterious universe, the responsible use of freedom - these and many more must be objects of the school's serious and sustained concern.

The school will come to a point beyond which it cannot go, and at which the churches must step in with what they consider fuller Christian truth. It is the obligation of the school to leave the way open for such further development by religious institutions, not to present a "closed system" of moral or spiritual interpretation with none other than human and finite references. It is the obligation of the churches to support this cultivation of spiritual values as a new ally in religious

teaching by means of which all children will be helped to rise above what otherwise might be a crass materialism, and those children already reached by more specific Christian education will respond more quickly and generously to the fuller teaching of the Gospel.

The churches must demonstrate appreciation of the specific role of the schools as they seek to discharge their appropriate task. For the most part the schools will not seek to win allegiance to any particular intellectual formulations of faith, doctrine, or creedal convictions. The several churches would be quick to protest were they to attempt such a role. In their cultivation of spiritual values the schools are giving expression to the ethical ideals of the Hebrew-Christian tradition. As they pursue that most difficult task, they must not be chided by the churches for not attempting to win assent to theological and doctrinal formulations.

It should be understood that there is a division of labor here. It is the obligation of the churches so to understand their faith that they will assume their own task of instruction, meanwhile welcoming the school's assistance in helping children and youth live that faith in the classroom, on the playground, and at the home. The churches must not surrender to the school or to any other agency the duty of expressing in everyday relationships the ethical ideals of Christian faith.

But the churches must understand and interpret their faith so that stalwart and sensitive character will be recognized whenever it is met. The churches should welcome gratefully as an ally any institution which aids in character development, building upon such foundations the greater structure of Christian personality.

11. There remains to consider the proposals for the establishment of a system of Protestant parochial schools growing out of a dissatisfaction with apparently inescapable secularist trends in present public education. What shall be our attitude toward the proposal?

For many decades Protestantism has accepted the public schools as the basic American educational system. While a few denominations have uninterruptedly maintained parochial elementary and secondary schools, most Protestant churches have abandoned elementary schools and have retained only a few church supported schools on the secondary level.

It is easy to understand the concern which causes Protestant leaders to advance so radical a departure from traditional American Protestant practice. The establishment of Protestant parochial education, however, will not solve the problems the churches face.



Our public school system should not be replaced with a program of Protestant parochial education, with or without support from public funds. The American public schools have been bought at too great a price and they promise too much for the future to be surrendered.

These, in briefest outline, appear to be the mutual responsibilities of public education and religion in America. No general prescription can be advanced, for what is immediately practicable or desirable in a particular community depends on a variety of factors. It is always desirable that the community as a whole should face the problem and that policy should be determined after full deliberation. The educational authorities together with the churches and synagogues must share responsibility for the creation of mutual confidence, respect, and understanding upon which success depends.

## IX

### THE CHURCHES AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES OF INFORMAL EDUCATION

There are many agencies of recreation and informal education in the community which the churches must take into account also in fulfilling their corporate educational responsibilities. The American Association for Adult Education estimates that there are 600 organizations in its field. The American Youth Commission in 1937 listed more than 200 national youth-serving organizations. Organizations serving children are as numerous in the field of child welfare alone, there being 450 organizations affiliated with the Child Welfare League of America.\*

Many of these groups like the "Y's," the Scouts, and the settlements, are privately supported agencies with a history of character-building work with youth, in some instances antedating the modern religious education movement of the churches. Other leisure-time agencies in the community, such as recreation centers, playgrounds, and 4-H Clubs, are wholly or in part tax-supported. The war has speeded up the trend toward the allocation of more public funds for community recreation.

There is ample evidence that the way in which children, youth, and adults spend their leisure time is one of the most determinative of all character-forming influences. At certain stages of development, the club or scout troop to which a youth belongs may be more influential in molding attitudes and habits than the school, the church, or even the home. Especially is this true when children spend weeks or months in summer camps. In some communities the Rotary Club may seem to be a more effective educational institution than all the adult Bible classes.

So widely is this fact recognized that these agencies of informal education and recreation are commonly referred to as

\* According to the Social Work Yearbook, 1945.

"character-building" agencies. This appellation is not wholly satisfactory, however, because churches and schools also obviously build character, and because people are attracted to these leisure-time associations by the activities themselves rather than to have their characters improved. In the youth field these agencies are frequently called youth-serving organizations.

Granting the contribution of these agencies and the concern of the churches for the total educational impact of the community, we face an important and difficult problem of inter-agency organization. Gradually a larger measure of coordination is being achieved among these agencies themselves. Through the recreation or group work section of Councils of Social Agencies, common interests are discussed, resources of leadership are sometimes shared, and cooperative undertakings are carried out. A larger measure of coordination on the national level is developing through the formation in 1943 of the Associated Youth Serving Organizations (AYSO).

Little progress has been made, however, in relating the churches to these interagency councils. Although many individual churches maintain cordial relationships in one way or another with the Scouts, the "Y," or some other agency, patterns of cooperation between councils of churches and councils of other community agencies have seldom been worked out. In other words, the procedure thus far has been largely piecemeal. A statesman-like approach to this problem of coordination on the part of both churches and agencies is clearly called for and mutually desired.

Basic to any move toward further coordination of effort is an analysis of the specific points where the churches have a concern about the program of these leisure-time agencies and where their potential contributions may best be made.

1. The churches should be concerned that these agencies achieve maximum effectiveness in developing character and personality in accordance with high ethical standards. These values are sought both for the large numbers of those not otherwise reached by the churches and for those actively related to the church. It is important for the sake of the integration of the experience of youth that churches and leisure-time agencies work toward common ends of personal development and social reconstruction.
2. The churches should be concerned that all of their young people shall have the experience of participation in one or more of the leisure-time agencies of the community. Although there is need to guard against undue competition of agencies for the time of youth outside school and church hours, there is even greater need for the extension of these recreational services to a larger proportion of the youth of our communities. Studies show that one-half or more of the children and youth of the average community take no active part in any organized recreational or educational program outside of

the school. Participation of church youth in leisure-time programs apart from church auspices takes on added significance when opportunities are provided for inter-denominational, interfaith, and inter-racial experiences.

3. The churches are concerned about better utilization of the techniques and program resources of these leisure-time agencies, to be made available in one of two ways: (1) through a troop, club, or other unit attached directly to the church; (2) by soliciting the aid of an agency leader in developing the churches' program with youth.
4. The churches have a concern to help supply and train leaders for community organizations, both public and private. There is no more effective way for the churches to make their contribution to the development of persons in leisure-time activities than through the devoted service of laymen as board members and volunteer leaders in these agencies.
5. In communities where no adequate coordination of leisure-time agencies has been achieved, the churches may be in a position to take the lead in bringing them together. This does not mean official sponsorship or control on the part of the churches, but a responsibility for seeing that sound principles are followed in interagency organization.

Patterns for cooperation between the churches as a body and other community agencies are so undeveloped that we can only suggest principles for exploration and experimentation.

The first step in community coordination probably is an interchange of experiences among leaders of the churches and the agencies, for the sake of more accurate information and mutual understanding.

Secondly, it is important to distinguish carefully the varying aims, approaches, and organizational practices of these community groups. There is as great variety in this respect among these agencies as among denominations. Churchmen who are seriously interested in church-agency cooperation need to make a special study of the philosophy and program of the major agencies.

For example, a different type of cooperation on the part of churches must be worked out with those agencies that do not operate through building centers of their own, but carry on their work in decentralized fashion in the community. Again, some of these agencies avoid any direct religious instruction or affiliation, whereas others have an avowed religious purpose and seek definite



affiliation with the churches. Methods of work differ also: some stress the formation of small, closely knit groups; others put the emphasis on mass recreational activities or individual participation according to interests. Again, some of these agencies are local in constituency and control; others are nationwide in scope and have a more or less uniform program to establish.

Again, communitywide patterns of coordination should take into account successful experiences of cooperation already gained on a more limited scale. In a number of communities, for example, councils dealing with recreation for teen-age youth have been functioning with representation from the churches, the "Y's," and other agencies. The experience of local inter-church youth councils warrants special study, as do also coordinating councils in smaller communities.

Finally, such exploration should lead to experimentation in church-agency coordination in a few communities of different sizes and types. The main purpose of such efforts should be: (1) to work out basic principles to guide individual churches and agencies as they seek closer cooperation; (2) to undertake a limited number of cooperative projects, such as a joint undertaking in the recruiting and training of volunteer leaders, or a co-ordinated approach to sections of the community where the recreational and religious resources for youth are wholly inadequate.

## X

### CONCLUSION

In presenting this report it is recognized that there remain many unresolved problems in the community approach to religious education. There has not been spoken here a definitive or final word in these complex and difficult relationships. It is hoped only that this document may carry the thinking of our Protestant forces another step forward.

Most of the problems relating to our community approaches to Christian education need further study and discussion by denominational groups and by inter-church councils. Only as we take seriously the community tasks of our Christian churches and give them the investigation and study commensurate with their importance will we redeem for our Lord the cities, towns, and villages of our land.

We call particular attention to the need of re-examining the traditional Protestant conception of the separation of church and state. There is need for a clear understanding of what we want this principle to mean and what we do not want it to include. There is great confusion, unrecognized for the most part, in the

minds of all Protestant groups. A common American Protestant understanding has by no means emerged.

We need to determine what we mean, not in terms of a general slogan but in terms of actual practices as they relate to schools, legislative bodies, prisons, the armed forces, and tax-supported institutions for the care of the ill, the maimed, and the poor. A uniform national principle may be what we want. Or we may decide that local variations according to the nature and needs of the communities may be desirable. In either event we need to choose intelligently and formulate policies deliberately. This Protestantism has not done.

We recommend that this document be used for study and discussion by denominational and interdenominational groups, particularly by the Conference on the Community planned for April 1947 and by the June 1947 meeting of the Association of Council Secretaries.

# THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## VIII

### THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF AGENCIES OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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The International Council of Religious Education

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THE COMMITTEE ON THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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## PREFACE

This document is one of eight reports issued by the Committee on the Study of Christian Education to the International Council of Religious Education. The committee was established by Council action at the Annual Meeting in February, 1944, with Dr. Paul H. Vieth of the Yale University Divinity School as chairman, Dr. Nevin C. Harner, now President of Heidelberg College, as vice-chairman, and Dr. Gerald E. Knoff of the International Council staff as executive secretary.

The committee interpreted its task as that of presenting its final reports as independent findings, addressed to the Council rather than as reports which necessarily had to have Council approval. The Council found itself in complete agreement with this understanding and took specific action to that effect at the Annual Meeting of 1945.

Some of these reports were presented to the Council at the February 1946 Annual Meeting; others were presented in 1947. All of the documents have been presented to the International Council though they are not to be interpreted necessarily as the findings of the Council.

Some of the recommendations have been formally adopted by Council action; others have been received for study and later action, as will be shown in the minutes of the International Council for the Annual Meetings of 1946 and 1947.

The substance of the eight reports together with other interpretive material has been incorporated in more popular form in the book, The Church and Christian Education, by Paul H. Vieth, published by the Bethany Press, St. Louis, for the Cooperative Publishing Association. The price is \$2.50. This book is suitable for use by lay people, by volunteer church workers, and for classroom work, as well as by professional groups.

The titles in this series of Study Committee documents are as follows:

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They may be purchased through the Business Department of the International Council of Religious Education, 203 North Wabash Avenue, Chicago 1, Illinois, at the prices indicated.

It is the hope of the Committee on the Study of Christian Education that these reports may be helpful in stimulating a critical re-examination of our programs of religious education in order that we may be more skillful leaders of those committed to our charge and better teachers of the Gospel.

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## Executive Committee

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THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS  
OF AGENCIES OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

7

INTRODUCTION

When the Study of Christian Education was begun by action of the International Council in February, 1944, it was with the understanding that the "services and work of the International Council" were to be examined. Among the formal actions taken by the Council was the approval of the recommendation "that the Council express to the committee its strong sense of the need of special study and consideration" of a group of specific problems, among which was "a definition of the functions of the inter-church agency of Christian education and of its committees and other groups."

The Administrative Committee, established by Council action, recommended to the Study Committee that the "structure and functions" of the agencies of Christian education be studied, along with six other general areas. To this work certain members of the Study Committee were assigned because of their special interests and experience. Others, not members of the general Study Committee, but in a position to bring peculiar insights and experience to its work, were called upon for assistance.

It was felt wise to begin the actual work of this committee somewhat later than that of the other committees in order to take into account the preliminary findings of the other groups engaged in the Study. In order that this committee might be acquainted intimately with the work of the other groups, considerable overlapping of membership was arranged. Of the 14 regular members of the Structure and Functions Committee, 12 had a second committee responsibility, in some instances major writing or executive assignments.

The first meeting of the committee was held on March 9, 1945, in connection with the general meeting of the Study Committee. At this session several general lines of investigation were suggested. It was generally agreed, for example, that for the most part the Structure and Functions Committee would confine itself to a critical appraisal of the work and organization of the International Council, and that it would not bring in recommendations regarding structure and functions of member agencies.

In general this decision has prevailed, though one section of this report deals with the structure and functions of state and city councils. This departure from the general procedure has been made, however, at the request of representatives of these agencies. These persons expressed the conviction that state and city councils would welcome suggestions concerning certain phases of their work, particularly those which impinge upon the functions of the International Council.

In this first meeting a variety of specific questions was raised as the committee endeavored to determine the proportions of its task. Relationships of the Council to its member agencies, possible overlapping of field services and programs, varying conceptions of the basic functions of the Council, its internal organization and future plans were discussed along with many other aspects of the work.

The March 9, 1945, meeting adjourned with the understanding that an investigation should be made of the convictions of the Council's member agencies concerning the structure and functions of the International Council as a basis for discussions at a meeting of the enlarged committee in Chicago.

This second session was held on June 25 and 26 with a larger attendance of both coopted and regular members. Representatives came from denominational boards, state councils, city councils, denominational publishers, International Council officers and staff.

For this meeting several types of resource material were available. The report of the Lake Geneva Conference in June, 1944, composed of representatives of the National and International Executives' Section of the International Council, the State and Regional Executives' Section, and the City Executives' Section was before the group. Also three questionnaires that had been sent out to member agencies and had been carefully tabulated were presented for examination. The first questionnaire was titled Inquiry Regarding the International Council. Replies to this set of questions came from 14 denominations and 9 state councils. The second questionnaire was headed Inquiry Regarding Structure and Functions of Denominational Agencies. Replies were received from 12 denominations. The third, Inquiry Regarding Structure and Functions of State and Provincial Council Agencies, set forth replies from 9 state councils. The results of all these documents were most helpful in guiding the committee to the issues which needed discussion and possible solution. Tabulations were sent to the member agencies of the Council, and a limited number are still available for study by member denominations and state councils.

At the close of the two days' session, six problems seemed to demand immediate attention:

1. What should be the basic functions of the International Council of Religious Education?
2. What changes should be made in the organization of the Council to fulfill adequately and efficiently those functions?
3. What should be the place of laymen in the organization and work of the Council?
4. What should be the relationships between the International Council of Religious Education and the Religious Education Council of Canada, the Canadian member denominations, and the provincial councils of religious education, in view of the probable organization of two National Councils of Churches, each with divisions of Christian education?
5. What are, and what should be, the relationships between denominational field programs of Christian education and the educational programs of state and city councils of churches?
6. What particular problems are involved in cooperative Protestant publishing, and how do they affect the workings of the educational boards?

Special assignments were made to individuals or to subcommittees to do preliminary work on these problems. Later sections of this report will deal with some of them. In the case of the problem of Canadian relationships, this issue, raised by officials of Canadian member agencies, is being worked out by Council staff members and representatives of Canadian denominations, provincial councils, and the Religious Education Council of Canada. Recommendations have not finally been reviewed by the Canadian groups, and will, therefore, probably come as a direct recommendation to the International Council from its Canadian members.

Toward the close of the June session, it was clear that a wide variety of attitudes was held as to the basic nature of the International Council of Religious Education. These ranged from a conception which would view the Council as a simple association for fellowship and interchange of ideas to a conception viewing the Council as the means through which Protestant churches discharge directly their educational tasks. The following six statements probably illustrate the varying shades of viewpoint on the question, "What should the International Council be?"

- "1. The International Council of Religious Education is the agency of the Protestant churches through which their Christian education staffs exchange ideas and experiences, enjoy the fellowship of inspiration and self-education, become aware of new opportunities and common responsibilities, and prepare themselves to carry on more effectively the work of their denominational boards and city, state, and provincial councils.
- "2. The International Council of Religious Education is the agency of the Protestant churches through which their educational leaders engage in study and research, examine areas of new service for the consideration of their respective agencies, evaluate present plans and processes, and together stimulate the interest of the American public in the religious education opportunities provided by the Protestant churches.
- "3. The International Council of Religious Education is the agency of the Protestant churches through which their religious educational leaders exchange ideas and experiences, plan religious education activities of a community-wide nature, and prepare to join together in certain common endeavors on the community level.
- "4. The International Council of Religious Education is the agency of the Protestant churches through which their religious education leaders exchange ideas and experiences, and through which they carry on certain common activities which they cannot well undertake separately.
- "5. The International Council of Religious Education is the agency through which the religious education forces of the Protestant churches exchange ideas and experiences, plan certain selected phases of their separate educational programs together, unite in carrying on certain designated aspects of their work cooperatively, and maintain a means whereby two or more of the denominations may join in certain common endeavors.



- "6. The International Council of Religious Education is the agency through which the Protestant churches marshal their religious education forces in a united program of action to provide an adequate Christian education both for those persons now related to the churches and those thus far unreached by the churches, and by which these churches cooperatively seek to Christianize the common life of America."

As the work of the Structure and Functions Committee progressed, it assumed that the Council and its member denominations would not consider statement 1 above as altogether an adequate definition of function of the International Council of Religious Education. American Protestantism as a whole was not ready to adopt statement 6. Somewhere between these two must be found the majority working conceptions of the International Council.

Prior to the third full meeting of the committee held in October, 1945, various subcommittees had prepared documents dealing with their specific assignments. These were carefully examined by the committee and some of them recommitted for further study.

In the process of discussion, three new questions emerged: (1) the wisdom of establishing an advisory section for campus religious workers; (2) the specific functions of state councils of religious education or Christian education; and (3) the formulation of general policy statements for International Council consideration. Committees were appointed to study and bring in recommendations on these matters for the May, 1946, meeting.

When the committee met in its fourth session on May 9 and 10, 1946, it heard reports from subcommittees appointed to deal with these three problems. An investigation had been made of the attitudes of member agencies concerning possible establishment of an advisory section for college and university religious workers, with replies from 18 denominational executives and 15 state council executives. The Subcommittee on the Functions of State and City Councils also reported. Suggested policy statements were drafted by the committee as a whole. A report also was made by the Subcommittee on Cooperative Publishing and a revised statement drafted and approved. The committee spent considerable time in examining a list of questions commonly raised concerning relationships between the International Council and its member denominations.

The fifth and final meeting of the Structure and Functions Committee was held in Atlantic City on June 13, immediately preceding the meeting of the Study Committee as a whole. At that time the following report was approved for submission to the larger group. After full discussion by the Study Committee, it was ordered referred to the International Council for whatever disposition the Council might deem wise.

# I. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

Before we consider details of organization and program, it is necessary to state clearly and in some detail what we regard as the functions of the International Council of Religious Education. In the charter granted to the Inter-

national Sunday School Association by the United States Congress in 1907, there is this basic statement of purpose:

"Section 2. 'That the purpose of the Association shall be to promote organized Sunday school work, to encourage the study of the Bible, and to assist in the spread of Christian religion.'"

Under this broad Congressional authorization, the International Council of Religious Education carries on today.

As the name of the International Sunday School Association was changed to the International Council of Religious Education, and as the By-Laws were formulated, certain basic convictions concerning methods of work were set down in the Preamble to the By-Laws:

- "1. We recognize it to be the right and duty of each denomination through its properly constituted Sunday school authorities to direct its Sunday school work.
- "2. We recognize that in the field of religious education, there is need for cooperative efforts between the various denominations, between the several denominations and organizations, and among the general organizations themselves and that there are problems in religious education that can best be solved by such cooperative effort.
- "3. We recognize that in the field of religious education, the local community, and local institutions and organizations have rights of initiative and local self-government.
- "4. We recognize the rights of the cooperating local churches and organizations to be represented as such in the direction and control of any community movement, which has for its purpose the training of workers for the local churches or the religious instruction of the children of the churches.
- "5. The International Sunday School Association henceforth, and until the Charter is amended, shall operate under the name and title 'The International Council of Religious Education.'"

Article I of the By-Laws of the International Council merely reaffirms the purpose of the International Sunday School Association as recognized in the Congressional charter:

"The purpose of the International Council of Religious Education shall be as specified in the Charter granted by Act of Congress: 'To promote organized Sunday school work, to encourage the study of the Bible, and to assist in the spread of the Christian religion.'"

The committee reviewed an unofficial statement which had been used by the General Secretary and the staff, setting forth long-term objectives of the

\* It is interesting to observe that the article "the" in the last phrase does not appear in the original Act of Congress.

Council, the content of which for the most part has been included in Recommendation 2, as given below and on the following page of this report.

There is need both for a fuller statement in the official By-Laws of the Council, and for an expanded statement for use by the Council's officers and staff as they attempt to interpret in detail the scope of the Council's activities.

We, therefore, recommend,

1. That Article I of the By-Laws of the International Council be changed to read as follows:

#### "Article I

#### PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS

In pursuance of its purpose as stated in its Charter, it shall be the function of the International Council of Religious Education to serve as the agency of the churches of North America through which their leaders in Christian education may (a) enjoy the inspiration and self-education which comes through fellowship, (b) share convictions, ideas, and experiences, (c) evaluate their current plans and practices, (d) examine areas of needed service, (e) carry on cooperative research, (f) carry on activities for enrichment of their denominational programs, (g) plan together religious education activities of a community nature, (h) cooperate in developing a public mind favorable to the conduct of Christian education, (i) unite in carrying on certain designated aspects of their work, (j) conduct experimentation in needed new fields vital to Christian education, (k) provide a means whereby two or more denominations may join in common endeavors of their choice, and (l) join in such other plans and activities as may seem wise and helpful."

2. That the following statement of functions be approved by the International Council as a statement for use by its officers, the General Secretary, and members of the staff:
  - a. To provide its member Christian education agencies with the inspiration, spiritual enrichment, and self-education which comes through fellowship.
  - b. To encourage and promote those values which come to the Christian education movement through cooperative activity.
  - c. To provide an avenue through which staffs of member agencies may exchange ideas and experiences, evaluate their plans and practices, and improve the quality of their educational programs for the churches and individuals whom they serve.



- d. To serve as a medium through which the staffs of member agencies may formulate plans for providing adequate Christian education for those now related to the churches and for those thus far unreached, as well as to serve as a medium through which they may determine which phases of such plans may be undertaken cooperatively or unitedly.
- e. To help inform persons, both within and outside the churches, regarding the past achievements, present activities, and future possibilities of the Christian education movement in North America and thus to help create a general climate favorable to Christian education.
- f. To help inspire men and women, particularly parents, to a larger measure of responsibility for the work of Christian education; to enlist both lay and professional forces in efforts for extension of Christian education services to those not now reached and for increasing the effectiveness of their work with those already within the fold of the church.
- g. To provide a means whereby all member agencies or any group of member agencies may unite in administering such tasks as they may wish to carry on unitedly.
- h. To conduct or arrange for the conduct of such research as is essential to the intelligent pursuance of its other functions.
- i. To plan together religious education programs of a community nature and to administer such continent-wide activities as are essential to the success of such programs.
- j. To maintain relationships on behalf of the Christian education movement with other religious forces, with character-building agencies, and with the government."

## II. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENTS

Need has been felt in carrying on the work of the Council for clear statements of Council policy in certain areas. For example, the Council has been asked from time to time to make public pronouncements concerning debatable social, educational, and religious issues. This immediately raises a large number of questions which need to be clarified. For example:

- 1. The degree to which the Council is able to speak for its member agencies, and the extent to which member agencies are to be bound by Council pronouncements has never been settled.
- 2. Giving counsel to the staff and members of committees concerning what they might properly say and do with relation to certain issues and what, on the other hand, lies beyond the scope of an educational organization such as the International Council.

3. The extent to which member agencies are to feel themselves bound to use the products of the cooperative process has sometimes caused misunderstanding.
4. The promotion of united national emphases has been attended with much uncertainty and some confusion. Members of the Council are not agreed upon the extent of profitable results from such promotion.
5. The matter of participation in cooperative activities carried on by two or more denominations within the structure of the Council, but not entered into by all or even by a majority of constituent agencies.

There is need for a clear statement of Council policy on these and similar matters.

We, therefore, recommend,

That the following statements of policy be adopted by the International Council for the general guidance of its officers, General Secretary, and staff.

#### 1. Regarding Public Pronouncements

The Council is by nature an educational agency of the churches. Such public pronouncements as are made by the Council, therefore, shall be limited to those issues which affect the functioning of the churches as educational agencies.

Pronouncements of the Council shall be recognized as statements of that body, and not of its member agencies. As such, pronouncements of the Council need not have the endorsement of its individual member agencies, nor does the Council in such statements represent officially its constituent denominations except as they individually endorse specific actions and authorize the Council so to represent them.

The Council in pronouncements concerning issues on which its members are divided shall make clear the extent of both majority and minority opinion.

#### 2. Regarding the Participation of Member Agencies in the International Council

The success of the Council as an interdenominational enterprise depends upon the extent to which member agencies participate in its committees and other working groups and make use of its educational products. Therefore, it is the earnest desire of the Council that the constituent denominations shall cooperate in all its activities and that there shall be widespread use by member agencies of the recommendations and materials which have been cooperatively planned and prepared. The Council recognizes, however, the right of member agencies to determine the extent and the points of their participation in its committees and other working groups and the use they will make of its educational products.

### 3. Regarding Statements of Christian Faith and Educational Philosophy

The Council will prepare from time to time statements of the Christian faith and of educational philosophy as bases for its own program building or field activities and as possible guides for the developing program of Christian education in the churches. While such statements, in the preparation of which member agencies have participated, may properly be recommended by the Council to the constituent agencies for their consideration and possible adoption in the development of their own programs of Christian education, it is recognized that these statements will not be set forth as representing the faith or convictions of individual member agencies except as they may have taken official action thereon.

### 4. Regarding Field Emphases and Services

- a. The Council may formulate and promote united national emphases when such emphases are desired by its member agencies.
- b. The Council may determine the patterns of promotion for such emphases, which may be used regionally, or by denominations at varying times and modified by local conditions.
- c. In unusual circumstances members of the Council may desire to unite in field emphases for the purpose of making a united impression upon American Protestantism.
- d. As a means of advancing interdenominational cooperation, it shall be the policy of the Council to encourage cooperative endeavor between two or more denominations where more comprehensive cooperation is not feasible.

## III. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE COUNCIL

During the quarter century of the life of the International Council, its activities have increased tremendously. New departments have been added. The number of advisory sections has been increased. The Staff has more than doubled within the past ten years. New needs have been pointed out by member agencies, and provisions made by the Council for the meeting of those needs.

Officials of denominational boards, executives of the state councils and heads of publishing houses have all been brought into closer relationship with the ongoing life and work of the Council. Laymen have been sought and their support and interest won, not for the financial undergirding only but also for the creative program work of the Council.

Yet in these 25 years no serious or sustained review has been made of the complex organization of the Council. Has it now become too complex and cumbersome? Or, is it too simple to meet adequately the needs of our boards



and councils, who themselves carry on elaborate and intricate programs? Do the relationships and functions of the advisory sections, Board of Trustees, Commission on Educational Program and educational committees need to be reconsidered in the light of changing conditions? These were some of the questions which began the investigation of the organization of the Council.

### 1. Advisory Sections

Advisory sections, as they first organized, were thought of as groups whose chief function was to "advise" the International Council in matters of program. While sections have never yielded this function with the passing of the years, they have used it less and less. Other purposes have come to the fore. It appears that the place of each section might be more clearly defined and the programs made more significant, were the various sections to undertake for themselves a definition of their place and functions.

There is dissatisfaction with the present unclear position of the International and National Executives' Section. This group is quite different from the others, and it would seem wise to give it a place in the organization of the Council commensurate with its strategic importance. However, no desire was expressed by denominational executives on the Structure and Functions Committee to have the Executives' Section constituted as an educational commission. The committee nevertheless is recommending a change in name and in the definition of function of this section.

There exists within International Council circles some sentiment for the organization of an advisory section for campus religious workers. The majority of our member agencies, however, counsel against the establishment of such a section. They urge, instead, the cultivation of a closer relationship of existing campus agencies with the United Christian Youth Movement, the International Council, and the local church programs of denominational boards.

Some propose that a superintendents' Section be created. It is obvious that with the coming of professionally trained leadership in Christian education, the Sunday school superintendent has been neglected. This is an unfortunate and surely an unnecessary development.

This lessening of concern has come about in spite of the fact that for every church school with a trained director, there are hundreds of Sunday schools with devoted volunteer superintendents administering their programs. This neglect, unconscious rather than deliberate, has made some superintendents feel that they have no part in the concern of the International Council. Sponsors of rival movements have been quick to seize upon this neglect and to capitalize it to their own ends.

We, therefore, recommend,

1. That the word "advisory" be dropped from the title of all sections, in order to indicate the broader functions which they have now assumed.

2. That there be added to the By-Laws, a new Section 3 in Article 6 to read as follows:

"Each section shall operate according to a statement of purpose and function which the Council approves on the section's recommendation. Such statements shall provide for:

- a. Suggestions and recommendations in the area of their respective interests, for the guidance of the Council, on matters of policy, program, and activities.
  - b. Mutual fellowship and the sharing of experiences in their respective fields which may or may not be a concern of the Council."
3. That the International and National Executives' Section be reconstituted as the Denominational Executives' Section, to be composed of the principal executives of national denominational educational boards.
  4. That the functions of this section be as follows:
    - a. The exchange of experience among denominational executives of boards of Christian education relating to their own tasks as principal executives of denominational staffs.
    - b. The discussion of denominational programs of Christian education for the common enrichment of all the boards represented.
    - c. The working out of common enterprises carried on by the International Council on behalf of its member denominational boards, and the tendering to the Council advice on matters of policy and program.
  5. That the present Section 3 in Article 6 of the By-Laws become Section 4, that Section 4 become Section 5, and that a new Section 6 be added to read as follows:

"Any group within such sections as the Publishers' Section, the Denominational Executives' Section, the State and Regional Executives' Section, and the City Executives' Section which meets to consider special interests which certain members have in common may present recommendations and advice to the Council either through the sections of which these persons are members or directly in the name of the group concerned."

6. That the International Council encourage a closer relationship between the United Christian Youth Movement and the United Student Christian Council, representing the National Student Councils of the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A., the Student Volunteer Movement, the Lutheran Student Association, the Inter-Seminary Movement, and the National Commission of University Work of the Council of Church Boards of Education.

7. That, while it is our judgment that a closer relationship should exist between college and university student programs and local church programs, we believe the question of the establishment of an advisory section for college and university religious workers should be held in abeyance pending the conclusion of studies now under way through the United Student Christian Council and the United Christian Youth Movement. We believe that this question should be given continued attention by the International Council until a more effective integration of student and local church youth programs have been achieved.
8. That provision be made in the Annual Meetings of the Council for Sunday school superintendents; that such provisions be made either through a subdivision of the Lay Section, or by means of the creation of a Superintendents' Section; and that the recommendation be referred to the Committee on Church School Administration and the staff.

## 2. Board of Trustees

There has not been presented to the Committee on Structure and Functions any evidence of dissatisfaction with the composition of the Board of Trustees of the Council. Membership of the present board includes laymen, denominational executives, council executives, publishing house executives, general educators, and ex-officio members. When the way is clear, a place should be found for two or more state or city council executives.

We, therefore, recommend,

1. That the Committee on Nominations of the Council be asked to preserve approximately the present balance of membership among five of the classifications set forth above.
2. That the Committee on Nominations be asked to increase as soon as practicable the representation of state and city council executives in order to include at least two council executives, one representing a state organization and one representing a city organization.

## 3. Commission on Educational Program

The Structure and Functions Committee commends the Commission on Educational Program for its careful attention across the years to the educational materials of the Council. The high quality of educational publications of the Council is itself the clearest evidence of the serious manner in which the Commission has conceived and undertaken its responsibilities.

Criticisms of the work of the Commission have been made from time to time, suggesting that however well it may be serving as a reviewing body, it is not functioning adequately as an initiating and integrating commission. The



Commission on Educational Program discharges its heavy responsibilities with all too little time for meetings. In some way it should become the source of new program activities and the coordinator of existing activities, without, we hope, lessening its careful attention to educational materials.

The size of the present Commission is not satisfactory. It is too small to function effectively. With the expansion of the Council staff, the Commission is in danger of becoming dominated by the employed directors of Council departments. Again, even though many of the denominational boards have added departments and directors of church school administration, few of these have membership on the Commission.

We, therefore, recommend,

1. That Article V, Section 2, of the By-Laws of the International Council of Religious Education be changed to provide for 25 members-at-large on the Commission on Educational Program.
2. That, in the appointment of these members-at-large on the Commission on Educational Program, the following considerations be kept in mind:
  - a. There should be represented on the Commission the editors of our denominational religious educational literature.
  - b. There should be a fair proportion of those denominational staff persons in charge of church school administration and those directly administering denominational local church programs.
  - c. There should be a fair balance of representatives from member denominations and from state councils.
  - d. A sufficient number should be appointed to make sure that the typical Commission session will not be over-balanced with International Council staff people.
  - e. There should be on the Commission some Biblical scholars, theologians, and other specialists selected from educational institutions, pastors and also laymen drawn from the categories mentioned in Section IV of this report.
3. That the Commission initiate study of broad religious movements and trends in order to bring them up for discussion of their educational implications and for later reference to appropriate committees, sections, associations, or other groups for study and report.
4. That the Commission, in addition to reviewing and clearing educational materials from committees, should study questions and issues of broad educational policy, bringing recommendations before the Council.

#### 4. Educational Committees

In general, the educational committees of the Council, including lesson committees, age group committees, and functional committees, seem to be

functioning effectively. The claim that the educational committees of the Council are the specialized interests of the denominational educational boards in action is a fairly accurate description. It has been pointed out that these committees have greatly increased in influence in Council affairs across the years.

The educational committees could make a larger use of specialists in other religious fields. The general principle, namely, that so far as possible the educational committees should be under the direction of those bearing direct responsibilities for similar work in denominations and in councils is sound. But to broaden their viewpoints and to enlarge their experiences, the committees might make a larger use of those skilled in the disciplines of Bible, theology, Christian ethics, etc.

We, therefore, recommend,

That the Council appoint as cooperating members of the educational committees theologians, Biblical scholars and other specialists, pastors and qualified laymen, the number being determined by each committee.

#### 5. Time Schedule of Annual Meetings

For some time, dissatisfaction has been expressed with the way the Annual Meetings, including sections', committees', and Council meetings, have been arranged. With simultaneous scheduling of seventeen sections, persons frequently visit one or more sections with attendant confusion and loss of effective working conditions. With the scheduling of the Annual Meeting of the Council immediately after the meetings of the educational committees and the Commission on Educational Program, a serious handicap is placed upon the effective deliberation of these bodies because of the lack of time for careful preparation or study of reports. The Council, usually convening in the early afternoon of Friday and adjourning late Saturday afternoon has had hardly enough time for the thoughtful consideration of the business before it. Some radical readjustments of the Annual Meeting schedule seem to be badly needed.

We, therefore, recommend:

1. That, instead of planning simultaneous section meetings, the staff experiment with the following plan, providing for classification of four groups of sections, as follows:

Group I.     Sections: Children, Young People, Adult, Publishers, Weekday

Group II.    Sections: Denominational Executives, Leadership, Missionary Education, Professors, Research, Vacation

Group III.   Alternating Sections: Directors, Editors, Pastors (these three to meet one year at the same time as Group I, the next with Group II.)

Group IV. Alternating Sections: Lay, State and Regional Executives, and City Executives  
(these three to meet one year at the time of Group I, the next with Group II.)

(This arrangement makes it possible to hold membership and actively participate each year in two sections meeting consecutively, the reduction in the time allowed for any given section under the new plan being more than made up by the ability to hold membership in and attend two sections, meeting through a possible four-day period.)

2. That the officers and staff of the Council consider the following weekly schedule for Annual Meetings, using this plan or some adaptation of it at their discretion.

a. Ten days should be taken for the Annual Meetings of the Council, as follows:

Thursday:	Age group committees
Friday:	Functional committees
Saturday:	Commission on Educational Program
Sunday:	(Free, or used for mass meetings, if desired)
Monday:	Group I sections
Tuesday:	Group I sections
Wednesday:	Group II sections, committees of Board of Trustees, important joint section meetings.
Thursday:	Group II sections, Board of Trustees, important joint section meetings
Friday:	Council meetings
Saturday:	Council meetings

b. If the above schedule seems too long, it be contracted by providing  $1\frac{1}{2}$  days instead of two for each group of sections, or by using portions of Sunday for the Commission, or by any combination. The ten days could be reduced to eight.

c. That, as another adaptation, the officers and staff consider the possibility of scheduling the meetings of the educational committees and the Commission on Educational Program in December or early January.



## 6. Program of the Council Annual Meetings

It has always been difficult to maintain a satisfactory balance between the necessity of transacting a great amount of Council business with dispatch and efficiency and the obligation to preserve the deliberative and educational nature of the Council. Sometimes the routine nature of the Council's business sessions has unfavorably been contrasted with the interesting programs of the sections and the spirited debate in the committees and the Commission. An unfortunate lack of interest in the proceedings of the Council has sometimes developed. Nor has it been easy to bring the work of all the Council departments and staff members before the plenary body and, at the same time, avoid tedium in the oral presentations.

We, therefore, recommend,

1. That the staff consider the bringing of an outstanding speaker to the Annual Meeting of the Council each year and that the Annual Meetings be the occasion of at least one address on some phase of Christian education or the wider task of the Church.
2. That as many staff reports as possible be brought in writing, not to be read publicly unless asked for nor discussed unless there is a demand for clarification.
3. That there be held occasional panel discussions on some topic of current interest in Christian education in place of, or in addition to, the address or addresses.
4. That the Commission on Educational Program be alert to bring in to the Council concerns of basic policy which the Council as a whole should discuss.

## IV. THE PLACE OF LAYMEN

The International Council of Religious Education inherits the traditions of the International Sunday School Association and the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations. With the strong lay character of the first organization and the predominantly professional and ministerial character of the second, the Council has a double tradition. Both the number and influence of laymen in the International Council declined steadily from 1922 to 1936. The period since has been marked by the return of interest and support of laymen, the movement and trend being inspired in part by the launching of the Laymen's Crusade for Christian Education.

In evaluating the place of laymen in the history of the International Council, mention should be made of the initial interest and support given a number of the Council departments by lay friends. Specific projects have been underwritten and brought along by individual laymen until they commended themselves for inclusion in the regular work of the Council. The formation of the Lay Advisory Section in 1943 has resulted in the enlistment of hundreds of laymen in the work and program of the Council.

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In attempting to define the place of laymen in the International Council, it is important to keep in mind that all laymen do not bring the same gifts to a cooperative enterprise, and they do not easily fit into a single classification. In discussing the place of lay leadership in the International Council, we must keep in mind four types of laymen:

1. Those laymen active in the tasks of the local congregations but not professionally employed in those responsibilities.
2. Laymen with special competence in particular fields, such as general education, sociology, law, etc.
3. Laymen with experience in promotion and public relations, possessing executive ability, good business judgment, combined with acceptable local church leadership.
4. Laymen who are religious education specialists not on paid staffs of Christian education agencies and other religious leaders in the various fields of the church's life and work.

It is in the official membership of the International Council that laymen should have a place of major service in Council affairs. The Council's membership as now constituted and as trends indicate over a period of years represents too narrow a base and should be broadened to include a larger number of persons representing the widest interests of the church and education.

The place of laymen on the Board of Trustees, on the Commission on Educational Program, and on the educational committees has already been discussed and recommendations advanced in the several divisions of the section on the organization of the Council.

We, therefore, recommend,

1. That the purposes of the Lay Section be so phrased as to include in its statement of purposes, the following objectives:
  - To represent the lay viewpoint in the determination of International Council policy and program.
  - To train lay leaders in interdenominational cooperation.
  - To prepare laymen for participation in the work of International Council committees and sections.
2. That the International Council should emphasize to the sections and educational committees the importance of obtaining, by one means or another, the lay point of view in their sessions. The sections and committees are to be encouraged to add laymen to their membership whenever they can find persons properly qualified and likely to be of service to them without jeopardizing professional values. In this encouragement the decisions are to be left in the hands of the sections or committees themselves as the judges of the situation.

3. That the denominations and state councils be asked to send a limited number of laymen as their representatives on the International Council, distributing such persons so that the Council may have adequate representation in each of the four classifications (1) to (4) mentioned earlier in this section.
4. That, in order to allow for this increase and, at the same time, to retain an adequate representation of denominational staffs, the By-Laws of the Council be modified so that agencies may increase their official representation to the Council by at least one person or up to 25 per cent of their present membership. The denominations and state councils should be asked in their appointments of laymen to include men and women who are active members of the governing boards of their agencies.

It seems wise that the sections which have been through their history predominantly professional organizations ought not to surrender their distinctive characters. The professional fellowship thus far achieved is an asset of great value and ought not to be put in jeopardy.

Interest groups should be developed within the present Lay Section, counting on persons from these groups to be worked into other sections when these persons are prepared to be of service and when these sections desire such additions.

## V. THE FUNCTIONS OF STATE AND CITY COUNCILS

### 1. Background Statement

During the work of the Structure and Functions Committee, it became evident that more detailed consideration needed to be given to the structure and functions of state and city councils than had originally been contemplated. A number of developments led to this decision.

For some time a concern had been felt by denominational executives and field workers and by national, city, and state council leaders that relationships needed to be more closely defined and means of working out common programs more carefully developed. This concern led to the establishment of the Joint Committee on Interdenominational Cooperation through State and City Councils which met at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, June 16 and 17, 1944. The report of this committee was discussed at a joint meeting of the International and National Executives' Section, the State and Regional Executives' Section, and the City Executives' Section in Columbus at the Annual Meeting of the Council in February, 1946. This report, and a summary of the discussion by these sessions, had been before the Structure and Functions Committee for consideration.

Replies from denominational and state council questionnaires collated for the June, 1945, meeting of the committee indicated again the need of a consideration of these problems of relationships. At that session, an investigation of typical state council and denominational programs was authorized in an attempt to discover how closely related such programs were to each other.



A report was brought to the Structure and Functions Committee in October, 1945, covering reported programs of five councils and thirteen denominational field men. Upon the basis of the returns, the conclusion was inescapable that, in the thinking of denominational executives, regional denominational leaders and state and city council executives "seem to plan their courses with distressing self-sufficiency." At the request of the denominational executives, meeting in Cleveland in December, 1944, the International Council called together a meeting of denominational field workers and city and state council executives to discuss common problems. A two-day conference was held in Columbus in February, 1946, immediately following the International Council's Annual Meeting. Though the conference was smaller than originally planned, the consensus was the same as that expressed three times before, i.e., guidance is badly needed in order that interdenominational co-operation, so whole-heartedly entered into by national officers and agencies and so badly needed by local churches, becomes genuinely operative in states and cities.

## 2. Basic Convictions

It is assumed in this report that Christian education is an organic part of the churches' life and work, not an independent expression, or a peculiar concern of, a special interest group. We take for granted, therefore, the conception of the united church council, with religious education assuming its place along with other aspects of the churches' work. Church councils should be "the denominations in cooperation," a phrase which should be an accurate description rather than a mere slogan.

We recognize that both the denominational program and the council organization are needed in American Protestantism. The council should not be an organization developing a competitive program to those of its member denominations. It should refrain from inaugurating and promoting activities not authorized by denominations.

But the denominations likewise have a responsibility. They should remember that the council is more than a convenient device for the accomplishment of certain difficult tasks. It is indispensable to the discharge of the community obligations of every local church. The program of the churches, whether expressed through a denominational or a council structure, is one program. If one of the two structures is weak, the program of the churches is rendered difficult or is restricted to just that extent. Where the two are strong, one complements the other.

In the planning of council programs and the shaping of council structures, it is important to remember that stubborn problems of relationships will often be solved because individuals have become convinced of the genuine Christian purpose of those who differ in their convictions regarding specific issues. The Lake Geneva report declared that opportunities for fellowship between denominational and council leaders may lead through mutual understanding to the solution of many perplexities; that sympathetic, rather than negatively critical attitudes, are important; and that the determination to learn from, as well as to influence, others will go far toward establishing that respect and confidence which make difficult adjustments relatively easy.

### 3. Aspects of the General Problem

Cooperative work in Christian education in the local community, city, county, or state, is not a new development in American Protestantism. As early as 1817 there was a Sunday School Union in Philadelphia. The American Sunday School Union was formed as early as 1824. County Sunday school associations are a hundred years old while state associations are nearly ninety years of age. Throughout its history, the Sunday school has enlisted the enthusiastic support of lay and ministerial leaders, uniting persons of various denominational traditions into a common program.

But with the merging of the former Sunday school associations and councils of Christian education into inclusive councils of churches, with the extension of these councils into relatively unorganized sections of the nation, and with the responsibility now felt and assumed by the denominations for directly aiding the educational work of their own churches, new problems have arisen, scarcely felt in earlier days.

Many of the specific difficulties arise because of three persistent tendencies. (1) The self-sufficiency of the educational programs of strong denominations, equipped to meet most of the needs of their local congregations, which makes necessary a reconsideration of the structure and functions of the councils. These larger denominations do not need many of the "collective self-service activities" often carried on by councils so valuable to smaller communions. (2) As the cooperative program grows and reaches maturity, it often becomes detached from denominational programs and becomes an entity in itself. Thus, persons speak of "denominations cooperating with the state council program" when they should speak of "denomination 'A' cooperating with denomination 'B' through the state council program." (3) The fact that the educational work of the church is a part of the total life and program of the church makes for certain difficulties in cooperative planning. Sometimes, the council of churches operating a religious education program is under the direction of those whose major relationships are with other than educational bodies. The resulting council educational program may or may not be satisfactory to denominational educational leaders as they meet it. Again, denominational executives may make certain commitments in good faith to a cooperative agency, only to have their general church legislative bodies adopt church wide programs which make interdenominational cooperation difficult, if not impossible.

### 4. Specific Problems and Recommendations

The Lake Geneva report indicated ten specific points at which tensions and difficulties have arisen. These problems clustered around the structural and functional organization of the councils, the relationships of councils to local churches, the relationships of councils to denominational educational agencies, and financial support. While nothing will take the place of persistent and frank facing, in personal conferences, of these and other problems by local leaders in a spirit of common Christian understanding, this report makes its recommendations for the thoughtful consideration of state and city councils of churches and religious education.



### 1. The Place of Christian Education in Councils of Churches

In some cases the state or local denominational agencies of Christian education find difficulty in gaining satisfactory participation in the determining and planning of the educational program elements within the broader programs of state and city councils of churches. Some councils of churches make inadequate provision for Christian education or organize it in such a way that denominational participation is hindered.

### 2. Specialized Service to Some Denominations and Areas

Denominations without professional state and city directors of Christian education often express a desire for council staff members to give educational guidance to their local churches while denominations having field workers of their own do not need this service. Likewise, some areas within the territory covered by a council lend themselves more readily to certain cooperative services than other areas where denominational services to local churches is the accepted pattern. How can a council reconcile these conflicting points of view?

### 3. Denominational Versus Non-Denominational Program Resources

There has been considerable complaint about the advertising accepted by some state and city council bulletins from non-denominational publishers of curriculum materials. On the other hand, these councils state that denominational publishers will not buy the advertising space which they must sell to finance these council periodicals.

### 4. City Council Relationships to the International Council of Religious Education

The leaders of many strong city councils of churches feel that they should have a more direct relationship to the International Council of Religious Education to avoid what they believe is lost motion in using the state council as an intermediary. On the other hand, the state council believes that the state work would be weakened were direct relationships established between the International Council and city councils, as the stronger city councils drew away from the state program and toward the International Council. These state councils believe that the unorganized or weakly organized sections of the state need the strength of the vigorous city organizations.

We, therefore, recommend,

1. That member denominational bodies, in appointing representatives on the plenary and executive bodies of state and city councils, include persons who carry responsibility for the religious education programs of those denominational bodies.
2. That there should be placed on each committee responsible for carrying out one or more phases of the educational program of a state or city council of churches those persons who carry comparable responsibilities in the member denominational bodies.



3. That state and city councils give full support to the principle that local churches should look primarily to their own denominational religious education agencies and field workers for guidance in relation to the educational programs for their own constituencies and should look to the councils, where such accredited councils exist, for leadership in cooperative community activities.
4. That state councils and councils in larger cities welcome and expedite the efforts of any two or more of the denominations not having their own field workers to employ cooperatively such field workers to "service" the educational programs of their churches.
5. That, in recognition of the fact that each denominations is expected to provide educational guidance to its own local churches, the councils should not provide promotion channels to competitive, non-denominational publishers and supply houses.
6. That denominational publishers be urged to make use of the advertising space available to them in council periodicals which promise a reasonable expectation of returns on such promotional expenditures.
7. That the present practice of providing Council memberships for state councils only be continued.
8. That state councils be urged to include in their delegations to the International Council some representative nominated by their larger and stronger city councils.
9. That state councils be encouraged to enter into mutual agreements with individual city councils which would permit direct relationships between the city council and the International Council on specific matters, as for example, leadership education accreditation.
10. That the International Council be urged to establish direct promotion and field service contacts with city councils in territories not covered by its constituent state councils.

## VI. EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS OF COOPERATIVE PUBLISHING PROBLEMS

Lesson courses for Sunday, weekday, and vacation church school classes constitute only a fraction of the educational materials purchased and used by churches. This is a period of transition in which wholly new types of curriculum aids and resources are being offered to the churches, some of them valuable, some wholly experimental, some of such quality or character as to negate much of the influence of our lesson courses. It may be that printed units of the present curriculum type will have a smaller place in the church school of tomorrow. Obviously, quarterlies and magazines, though perhaps not replaced, will need to be supplemented by many new resources.

The educational leadership of denominations must concern itself with this problem. Thousands of churches are purchasing equipment for slides and film strips. Many are even prepared for movies. Once an investment is made in a projector, the church looks for slides and film strips, and it naturally seeks these materials at low cost. Thus far, few denominations, if any, have produced an adequate series of slides and film strips so chosen as to provide pictures which can be used over and over again in various sequences in connection with approved curriculum units. Therefore, the churches answer the advertisements of commercial producers and sometimes secure materials which are in conflict with much of the teaching of the printed courses.

More and more, the field forces of denominations are recommending unprojected pictures for the use of church school classes, for gifts at graduation from one department to another, and for parents to purchase for home use. The possibilities in this form of teaching are very great. More good pictures are needed. They should be produced in quantity so as to be available at low cost. They should be provided by the distributing agencies of the denominations.

Certain commercial agencies are also venturing into the field of audio aids. Particularly during the next few years when the churches will make an earnest effort to restore the teaching of religion to the home, there will be a large response to advertisements which offer attractive booklets, records, and other materials. The amount of money now spent for secular phonograph records is staggering. When thrilling children's stories told by expert storytellers are put on records and sold at prices comparable to those charged for famous band recordings, there will be a large and profitable sale. It is important, however, that the right stories be told, and the churches should protect their constituencies by supplying the best stories on records which they themselves can distribute.

The production of church choir music is almost wholly in the hands of commercial publishers. Much of it is good. Much is not. Here is a field which the churches themselves should enter for the improvement of worship. Those who own the copyright could also make such choir music available for home and church use by recording such numbers by great choirs.

Some of the denominations produce their own church school supplies - promotion certificates, announcement and gift cards, record books, and other materials. But because the cost of producing such materials is great, many of these supplies are purchased from commercial manufacturers who are not concerned with the educational value of what is offered. If a number of denominations could manufacture these supplies in cooperation, high-grade materials could be produced at a low cost and at larger profit to denominational publishing houses.

The major concern thus far expressed is educational. These and other materials are not strictly curriculum materials but they have teaching value. That is, they either teach that which is consistent with denominational standards or they teach that which is inconsistent with the series of curriculum units which the churches prepare. But there is a concern also that the churches be able to secure what they should have from their own publishing houses at a reasonable cost and at a reasonable profit to the denomina-

tional agencies. Few of these houses can produce an adequate supply of visual resources alone and sell them at a price which meets the competition of commercial producers. Quantity production is necessary, and that is possible only when the forces of Protestantism unite in a planned program of production as they have now done in the distribution of films.

The Cooperative Publishing Association is the agency through which denominational publishers unite to prepare and sell some types of standard curriculum materials. It could, by extending its area of service, profitably enter certain of these other fields. At any rate, it is the agency through which the opportunity and the problem can be considered.

We, therefore, recommend,

That the Cooperative Publishing Association be asked to study the needs of the churches in the wider field of program resources, to consider the possibility of cooperative production of certain of these needed resources, and to recommend a method by which the denominations themselves may produce and make available high-grade program and curriculum aids (printed and audio-visual).

### CONCLUSION

The Committee on the Study of Christian Education presents this report to the International Council of Religious Education, not as a complete analysis of all the problems of structure and functions faced by it but as material for study and discussion by its sections, committees, and other groups.

Twenty-five years is a sizeable period in the history of any educational institution, and it calls for self-examination and re-appraisal. But this particular quarter century, characterized by so many significant developments within the Christian church and so many world-staggering catastrophes in our society makes doubly imperative the obligation to look with critical eye upon traditional procedures and practices.

The formation of the new National Council of Churches with its Division of Christian Education will pose new problems for the cooperative work of the church educational boards. The obligation to bring into this merger a vigorous Christian education program is inescapable. If some denominations choose to remain apart from the new Council while their boards of Christian education wish to join the Division of Christian Education, a situation will be created calling especially for wise statesmanship.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the significance of this report, along with the other sections of the Study of Christian Education, will be in direct proportion to the amount of discussion it receives at the hands of the International Council, its committees and sections, state and city council groups, denominational boards, college and seminary classes, and, in short, by all those concerned for cooperative Christian education.



Since the report is to come before the Council in 1947 for study and discussion only, looking toward possible action on its recommendations in February, 1948, there will be full opportunity for serious consideration in the months ahead. The committee presents this document, therefore, with the hope that from it may come a strengthening of our teaching agencies, both denominational and interdenominational, the better to discharge our Lord's commission, "Go...teach."







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